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ABSTRACT

This manual, which is designed for home economics teachers who are interested in using alternative forms of student assessment, shares current thinking, research, and practices regarding the use of alternative forms of assessment in family and consumer sciences occupational programs. The manual is divided into three parts. Part 1, which is devoted to the concept of assessment, presents information and teacher activities on the following topics: definition of assessment; assessment-related terms; differences between conventional and authentic assessment; qualities of effective assessment; and purposes of assessment. Discussed in part 2 are the following assessment process activities: connecting learning and assessment; reporting and using results; and managing alternative assessment. Part 3, which constitutes approximately 75% of the manual, begins with an overview of alternative assessment approaches and contains handouts and instruments for use in designing/conducting the following types of alternative assessment: testing; product/project assessment; performance assessment; process skills assessment; conferences and interviews; decision-making matrices; graphic organizers; class/group discussion; journals and learning logs; observations; portfolios; questioning; rubrics; and scoring sheets. A wide variety of assessment tools is provided, including samples, templates, checklists, sample forms and letters, and tip sheets. Contains 28 references. (MN)

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Alternative Assessment:
A Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher's Tool Kit

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Alternative Assessment:
A Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher's Tool Kit

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Division of Vocational and Adult Education

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1996

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CONTENTS

Foreword v
Preface and Acknowledgments vii

Introduction 1

What Is Assessment? 3
Defining Assessment 5
Teacher Activity: What Assessment Means to Me 5
Terms of Assessment 8
Teacher Activity: What Are the Strengths of My Current Assessment System? 12
Authentic Assessment 13
Comparison of Conventional and Authentic Assessment 14
Qualities of Effective Assessment 16
Purposes of Assessment 19
Teacher Activity: Why Do I Assess? 19

What Should I Do Regarding Assessment? 23
Connecting Learning and Assessment 25
Reporting and Using Results 27
Assigning Grades 28
Reporting Results 29
Managing Alternative Assessment 31
Teacher Activity: Reflecting on Learning Goals 31
Planning and Implementing Alternative Assessments 32
Tips for Managing an Assessment System 33

What Tools Should I Use for Assessing Learning? 35
Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches 37
Types of Assessment 37
Assessment Ideas for Individuals and Groups 38
Tests 40
Product/Project Assessments 40
Performance Assessments 41
Implementation Guidelines 42
Process Skills Assessments 43
A Rationale for Focusing on Process Skills 43
Elements That Encourage Process Skills in the Classroom 44
Teachable Moments 44
Suggested Steps When Teaching Process Skills 45
Development of Process Skill Indicators 46

Some Alternative Assessment Tools 55
Conferences and Interviews 57
Types of Conferences and Interviews 57
Example: The Project Interview 58
Handout: Peer Assessment Conference on Performance 60
Handout: Record of Community Service Conferences 61
Decision-Making Matrices 63
Handout: Decision-Making Matrix: Directions 64
Handout: Decision-Making Matrix [blank form] 65
Graphic Organizers 67
How and When to Use Graphic Organizers 68
Brief Directions for Using Graphic Organizers 68
Evaluation Options 69
Handout: Graphic Organizers—Samples 70
Handout: Graphic Organizers—Templates 72
Class or Group Discussion 75
Handout: Class or Group Discussion Rubric 76
Journals and Learning Logs 77
Ways to Use Journals and Learning Logs in Instruction 78
Assessment of Journals and Learning Logs 80
Observations 81
Handout: Habits of Mind Observation Assessment 83
Portfolios 85
Purposes of a Portfolio 85
Guidelines for Implementation 86
Handout: Inside the Portfolio for Balancing School, Family, and Work 91
Handout: Inside the Portfolio [blank form] 92
Handout: Portfolio Checklist 93
Handout: Portfolio Review 94
Handout: Monthly Portfolio Letter 95
Handout: Job Readiness Skills Portfolio 96
Handout: Job Readiness Skills Portfolio—Product Assessment 97
Questioning 99
Handout: What's the Question? 101
Rubrics 103
Advantages of Using Rubrics 103
Guidelines for Writing Rubrics 104
Ideas for Developing a Presentation Rubric 105
Handout: Action Project Assessment 108
Handout: Brochure Assessment 109
Handout: Teamwork—How Effective Were We? 110
Handout: Videotape Assessment 111
Scoring Sheets 113
Handout: Teamwork Skills Scoring Sheet 114
Handout: Discussion Scoring Sheet 115
Resources 117

FOREWORD

With almost every segment of our society insisting on accountability and documentation of student achievement, assessment is becoming the focus of current educational reform. Educators are reemphasizing the important connections between teaching, learning and assessment.

This publication shares current thinking, research, and practices on how to use and create alternative forms of assessments for Work and Family Life Programs. The assessment approaches are also appropriate for Family and Consumer Sciences Occupational Programs. The handbook is designed to help teachers develop more effective assessments, which are strongly linked to teaching and learning and, thus, obtain a more accurate picture of student achievement.

The Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Section recognized the importance of assessment as a component of the educational process and is pleased to provide this assessment handbook to Family and Consumer Sciences teachers. Special appreciation for development is extended to Dr. C. Michael Loyd, Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University; and to the Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers who contributed to the development of this assessment handbook.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

What should we do to prepare youth for life in the twenty-first century? Change today is rapid and radical. Technologies are changing our life-styles and the ways we must think and act. There is an explosion of knowledge: More than 90 percent of what is known about the human brain is the result of research done in last ten years (Margulies 1991, p. 10). Complex challenges related to the environment, ethics, politics, social issues, and more, demand that educators bring out the best in learners.

Few of us would support the notion that the appropriate response is to continue the sole use of the long-held beliefs and practices that prevail in many educational environments. More of the same is not the answer. The meaning of education must change. The work of educators must change.

Mandates and challenges to respond come to educators from many fronts—governments, parents, students, community groups, the media, business and industry, other educators, and one's own view of self and teacher. Although not always the case, how educators choose to respond is largely a matter of personal choice.

Which adjectives describe your responses to educational change?

Confident, apprehensive; exhilarated, depressed; challenged, evasive; active, passive; turned-on, turned-off; invigorated, stressed; committed, indifferent

Feelings of being overwhelmed or of needing a great deal of time in order to change often produce undesirable responses. Yet, take a little bit of knowledge; add some—but not much to start—time (not thyme), some collegiality, and a touch of willingness-to-try; and a spark for the positive can be found.

Work and Family Life teachers have not been and will not be exempt from educational reform. Based on cognitive science theory, the practical problem-solving approach used in the six Ohio-developed resource guides for the Work and Family Life Program represents a new direction for family and consumer sciences education. Used in several states, the resource guides have been affirmed as providing a ***positive*** direction for the twenty-first century. Effective use of the resource guides requires "new" approaches that initially may or not be comfortable; however, many Work and Family Life teachers have developed the necessary teaching skills to implement those approaches. In fact, over 60 Work and Family Life teacher-leaders are willing to be called upon by teachers for assistance. Even though the ultimate ***aim*** of Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences programs—to strengthen families, empowering individuals to take action for the well-being of self and others in the home, workplace, community, and world—is strongly supported, it is the ***actions*** of teachers, individually and collectively, that determine the relevance and viability of the Work and Family Life Program.

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With many teachers now confident with the change in approaches to instruction, there has been an increasing call for assistance with "new" ways to assess students. The Work and Family resource guides contain three levels of model assessment tasks—paper and pencil, classroom experiences, and application to real-life settings for each competency. Although the assessment tasks are sound in that they are related to instruction and to real-life contexts, Work and Family Life teachers need skill in using alternative assessment devices in order to shift and integrate their assessment practices with their contemporary instructional approaches. This manual is a partial response to that call.

> **"The goal of alternative assessment is to reduce the gap between what we care about and what we assess."**
> ***Balancing Work and Family: Curriculum Addendum,* 1995, p. 3**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Fall 1996: "You want me to develop a Work and Family Life teachers' guide to alternative assessment? Well, I do have an evaluation background. I have been a secondary home economics teacher and a teacher educator. And, I am an alternative kind of guy. Yeah, I can do that. But, I will need help."

Little did I know then how much help I would need. The body of knowledge about alternative assessment is massive. Delving into it has been invigorating, confusing, and sometimes overwhelming. At times, the Ivory Tower library would entrap me. But, I'd find a window and look out across the land and envision all the Family and Consumer Sciences teachers just waiting for this manual, and I would vow to make it teacher-friendly. Yeah, right! Seriously, there was a window, sort of, and through it I frequently would see Robin White, Ohio Department of Education Family and Consumer Sciences Education State Supervisor. There she would be: "Great idea. Teachers are really going to like that. Lookin' good. Don't forget teachers don't have much time. Teachers like to pull out and use. I like the outline. Give them examples. We need to be sure it is flexible. Don't worry, it will be fine. You're doing great." Thanks, Robin. Your input and support have been greatly appreciated. I hope you can see it reflected in the manual.

Back to Fall 1996: Thanks to Judy Wagner at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education for assisting with the initial literature review. Robin White; Sandy Laurenson, also a Family and Consumer Sciences Education State Supervisor; and Dr. Janet Laster, Associate Professor, Family Relation and Human Development/Home Economics Education, The Ohio State University, provided several resources and were instrumental in helping me to conceptualize the manual.

AVA 1995 at the Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum Showcase: "Mike, come with me. You've got to see this!" I followed a bubbling Janet Laster across the hall to a display of Kansas's *Balancing Work and Family* curriculum and addendum, which included an assessment guide. "Mike, I really think this could be a basis for your work." I looked at it briefly and later purchased a copy.

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Winter and Spring 1996: I started bubbling. The Kansas assessment guide was a real find! Teacher-friendly with lots of good ideas. Thanks, Janet. With contacts to Carolyn Corwin, the Kansas Curriculum Project Coordinator, and Linda Johnson, Program Consultant for the Kansas State Board of Education, approval was granted to use substantive portions of the guide. They graciously acknowledged the curriculum development work of Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences teachers as important to their curriculum development and were happy to be able to reciprocate. Thanks to the Kansas people for a great foundation.

On various occasions 1996: "Hey, Mike. How's that assessment guide progressing? You know teachers are going to need that for fall inservice workshops. Let me know if you need help." Statements like that from the boss always help to keep you moving. Thanks, Dr. Deborah Bingham Catri, Director, Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory. Your support kept me moving in a positive way!

Late Spring 1996: Robin, Sandy, and I get together to hash out the present state of affairs. We end up doing a mapping exercise that ultimately leads to the drawing on the front cover—an attempt to visually represent the manual's contents and the processes related to using it. Robin and Sandy, I already thanked both of you, so I won't do it again.

July 1996: Work and Family Life teachers from across the state joined me to spend a day reviewing my rough, very rough, draft. Also present was Lois Harrington, Senior Program Associate at the Center on Education and Training for Employment and future editor of the manual. The day was extremely productive and led to substantive improvements. It was a great day with a fun group of teachers. Lois, evaluations of the day clearly said you were instrumental, but I'll thank you later! Thanks to all the teachers. You made a difference!

Dee Cackler
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Trotwood-Madison High School

Leann Thacker
Carlisle High School

Helen Ward
Anna High School

Sue Wilson
Fairfield High School

Late July and August 1996: The heat is on! It's crunch time! Press deadline approaches. Lois Harrington awaits to edit. Kathy Kush at the far office in the Center on Education and Training for Employment readies to do the desktop publishing. Linda Lutz, Graphic Artist, Lutz Design, presses forward to complete the assessment logo and front cover graphics. Suddenly, Loyd completes his work; it's a forward pass to Harrington! A quick turnaround and it's back to Loyd! Look at that! You'll never see quicker corrections. A lateral pass to Kush where Lutz's work joins the huddle for the layout. And, it's on to press via a patiently waiting Dave Halsey, Publications Manager! What a team! To all those involved in this play, your superb skills, your supportive attitude, your dedication are appreciated. To all those involved along the way, we did it! Thanks.

INTRODUCTION

We, ourselves and our students, live in a complex, messy world. Each day brings with it new challenges, opportunities, triumphs, and tragedies. Each day, individually and collectively, we must take action in this context of complexity and messiness. Each day, individually and collectively, educators confront how to prepare students for their real worlds. Deriving and taking action in light of what is best for students is extremely complex, typically requiring actions on many fronts. Frequently, taking desired action means first learning how to do so.

One contemporary front for action relates to the question: How do we know that kids are achieving? It is the ***assessment*** front. In part, the assessment front has arisen from criticism of current educational systems and the notion that students aren't learning—at least, not what society expects them to learn. As such, it becomes also the ***accountability*** front.

But, the assessment front also has arisen and gains momentum from the desires of teachers to do what is best for students. Intrinsic to their beings as effective educators, teachers want to know that what they thought they taught was indeed learned by students. For themselves and for their students, effective teachers know that quality assessments are integral parts of any effective educational experience.

Yet, teachers are not born assessors. They ***learn*** how to assess. They learn through formal education and informal sharing, by trying out assessment activities, and by evaluating what assessment tells them about their students. Effective teachers learn that paper-pencil testing never has been and never will be enough. Regardless of educational fads or reform attempts, effective teachers learn that multiple assessment strategies must be used to answer the question, How do I know that my kids are achieving?

This manual is designed for teachers who want to increase their proficiency with assessment. It is meant to trigger a renewal of interest in assessment and to provide beginning assistance for getting out of the assessment-as-usual mode. Although this manual can be used by "The Lone Teacher," there will be much more "Hi-ho! Up and away!" if teachers form ongoing groups for producing, sharing, and reflecting. It is a manual that is meant to be edited, marked up, added to, and drawn from. It is a process manual, not a content manual. Over time, the manual should become a unique expression of the teacher using it and the students being taught. An inner city teacher's manual is likely to be much different from a rural teacher's manual.

This manual may lead a teacher to make one assessment activity for one class a little bit better. Or, it may lead a teacher to take on a totally new role in regard to assessing students. Either way, use of the manual will require time, an extremely precious commodity to teachers (time-saving tips are mentioned later). Although there is no "guarantee of satisfaction or your time back," the application of this manual—if accompanied by the spirit of a pioneer—can energize students in ways a teacher may have never seen before. Maybe students won't leap tall buildings in a single bound, but—with time—they might consider trying!

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

✓ Defining Assessment

Activities in this section will help you explore your beliefs about and role in assessment. Content includes a comparison of conventional and alternative assessment approaches; commonly used, contemporary terminology; characteristics of authentic assessment; and characteristics of quality assessments.

✓ Purposes of Assessment

This section contains an activity to guide you in exploring reasons for engaging in assessment and how assessment results can be used. It provides the "big picture" of assessment's intent and explains how student assessment is an integral part of education inside and outside classrooms.

Defining Assessment

Teacher Activity: What Assessment Means to Me

Do you believe your assessment system is the best it can be? If seriously challenged, could you convincingly explain and defend your assessment practices and policies to students and parents? If "No . . . I don't know . . . I guess not," then the results of this activity may be the starting point for positive actions so that you can respond, "Yes! I believe! I can!"

In the space below, portray your current thinking about assessment. Use words, symbols, drawings, lines, arrows, etc., to show the essential qualities or characteristics and interrelationships. An example of this type of activity can be found on the cover of this guide. Don't worry about what it communicates to anyone but yourself. Be creative. Have fun with it, and it is likely you will arrive at some new realizations.

Look at what you produced. What does it mean in regard to your desire to act? Does it explain your current actions, or can you decipher in it a call to action? If inclined, write your response.

If you have done this with a group of teachers, share your creation and orally explain it. Revise your creation, if necessary, as you listen to others.

Contemplate from time to time what you have produced here. Revise or start anew as you grow.

Defining Assessment

Assessment, as defined by the *Encyclopedia of Educational Evaluation* (1975), is a process of gathering information to meet a broad range of evaluation needs.

In years past, the essential qualities or meaning of the term *assessment* could be characterized by an affirmative answer to the question, Is this going to be on the test? Teachers frequently relied upon a familiar set of classroom assessments—pop quizzes, teacher-made tests, end-of-unit tests provided by text publishers—to ascertain student progress and assign grades. Assessments were administered separate from instruction on "test days" or "Get out your paper and pencil; it's pop quiz time." Quantitative scores were the important scores, and they were turned into grades by comparing students' scores or using some subjective interpretation. The quest for assessment was to discover what ***content*** students had mastered ***after*** a unit of instruction. This characterization of assessment has been labeled *conventional, or traditional, assessment.*

> **"Citizens in the 21st century will not be judged by their ability to bubble in answers on test forms."**
> **Hiebert and Calfee, 1989, p. 54**

Today, the essence of assessment is characterized by an affirmative answer to the question, Will I have to know or be able do this in the real world? It is a characterization with less-defined limits or boundaries, reflecting the desire to tap into significant and enduring student outcomes. ***Teachers who support this new characterization of assessment still use conventional methods***, but they also employ a variety of other methods or strategies to assess students' products, performances, and processes that are difficult to assess conventionally. The creation of an assessment system is no longer teacher-centered. Teachers become the managers of a system in which parents, students, and community members participate in creating and using the assessments. Instruction and assessment become meshed. That is, assessment is not done ***to*** the student; rather, the student is ***actively involved*** in the assessment process and learns from it. Assessments become collections of students' work. Scores reflect well-described levels of attainment of a standard and are turned into grades to reflect attainment of a set of standards. The quest for assessment is to describe students' knowledge, skills, and other traits ***throughout*** and ***for*** instruction.

> **"Students should begin to regard the assessment experience not as a gruesome 'judgment day' but rather as another opportunity to learn."**
> **Armstrong, 1994, p. 132**

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Defining Assessment

Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters (1992, p. 13) note five recent trends in assessment. They are movements from (1) behavioral to cognitive views of learning and assessment, (2) paper-pencil activities to authentic assessment, (3) single-occasion assessment to samples over time (portfolios), (4) single-attribute to multidimensional assessments, and (5) near-exclusive emphasis on individual assessment to group assessment. They also recognize that these trends place unprecedented demands on teachers' professional skills. The contemporary Work and Family Life Program is reflective of each of these trends.

Today's characterization of assessment is certainly not new. In fact, the term *assessment* is derived from a Latin word meaning "to sit beside, assist in the office of a judge." The assessor and the student oftentimes sit together during assessment. Effective instruction throughout history has involved this characterization of assessment, e.g., apprenticeships. The characterization only seems new in comparison to the recent past, which involved the almost-exclusive use of standardized testing and teacher-made multiple-choice tests. What is new is the clarity of the characterization, which can be credited to criticism of the assessment practices of the recent past and to advances in cognitive science and knowledge about learning.

With this newfound clarity about assessment comes a plethora of terms! They are presented here (1) as a quick reference when you see an unfamiliar term used in this guide and (2) to bring you up to contemporary snuff when you hobnob with fellow assessment wizards! Some terms, except in the minds of heavy-duty researchers, overlap. That's okay, don't worry. Some terms, like *alternative assessment*, are to me a bit troublesome. Really, such assessments should not be "alternative"; I believe they should be an assessment mainstay! **Read the terms and definitions. Ponder them for a few moments if you have time. Doing so should trigger some personal thoughts or beliefs about assessment.**

Over time, bring clarity to your personal definition of assessment. In doing so, you will learn about yourself as a teacher and, I bet, become committed to improving your assessment practices.

Defining Assessment

Terms of Assessment

. . . that may or may not be enduring, or endearing

Anchor
An anchor is a descriptive point on a scale/continuum. The highest-level anchor is called the *exemplar*.

Assessment
Assessment is a process of gathering information to meet a broad range of evaluation needs.

- **Alternative Assessment**
  Alternative assessment applies to any and all assessments that require students to demonstrate knowledge and skills in ways other than through the conventional methods used within a classroom, school, or district. (See also *Conventional, or Traditional, Assessment*.)

- **Authentic Assessment**
  Authentic assessment engages students in applying knowledge and skills in the same way they are used in the "real world" outside school. It is performance-based assessment that requires a student to go beyond basic recall and demonstrate significant, worthwhile knowledge and understanding through a product, performance, or exhibition. The assessment comprises an authentic task and a scoring rubric that are tied to an outcome or "big idea" and are made clear to the students up front.

- **Conventional, or Traditional, Assessment**
  Conventional assessment refers to paper-pencil testing (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, short answer) that typically must be completed within a specific amount of time.

- **Naturalistic Assessment**
  Naturalistic assessment refers to evaluation rooted in the natural setting of the classroom. It involves observation of student performances and behavior in an informal context. Naturalistic observation is done as students go about their daily work and is sometimes called *kidwatching*.

- **Performance Assessment**
  Performance assessment is a broad term, encompassing many of the characteristics of both authentic assessment and alternative assessment. Generally, performance assessments provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and to thoughtfully apply knowledge, skills, and habits of mind in a variety of structured and unstructured situations. These assessments often occur over time and result in a tangible product or observable performance.

Defining Assessment

- **Process Assessment**
  Process assessment refers to assessing a student's skills in progressing through a series of actions or operations. Process skills that teachers seek to assess relate to thinking abilities, applications of procedural knowledge, and interactions with others. Some examples of process skills are critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, goal setting, cooperation, relating to others, leadership, and management.

- **Product/Project Assessment**
  Products and projects are typically assigned to individuals or groups of students on a topic related to the curriculum. The project results in a product, which is assessed. The processes used during the assessment could also be assessed.

Benchmark
A benchmark translates the standard into what the student should know and be able to do at developmentally appropriate levels. Benchmarks are models that teachers, parents, and students can refer to when designing, implementing, and assessing student outcomes.

Criteria
Criteria—sometimes called *performance standards*—are the qualitative or quantitative statements used to measure whether the program *standard* (competency achievement) has been met. The nature of the criteria may vary depending on the specific assessment tool being used. However, for the process skill (competency), *Manage work responsibilities*, for example, one criterion for measuring a student's ability in that area would be, *Gets work done on time*.

Documentation
Documentation is a naturalistic assessment process, which involves recording classroom observations over time, across learning modalities, and in coordination with colleagues.

Graphic Organizers
Graphic organizers are mental maps that help students make their thinking visible. They represent the process skills of sequencing, comparing, contrasting, classifying, inferring, drawing conclusions, problem solving, and thinking critically.

Indicators
Indicators provide specific examples and explicit definitions that can be used in rating students' level of achievement relative to specified skills, strategies, and knowledge.

Defining Assessment

Outcome
The word *outcome* is often used interchangeably with *goal, purpose, demonstration of learning, culmination,* and *end.* **Exit outcomes** may be used synonymously with such terms as *competencies, knowledge,* and *orientations.* Outcomes are the "end-products" of the entire instructional process. Outcomes can include internal changes in the learner or observable changes. In the Work and Family Resource Guides, the outcomes are expressed by the intent or goals of the Work and Family Life Program described in the introductions to each guide and by the positive actions students are asked to take regarding the practical problems that frame the guides.

Portfolio
A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas.

Rubric
A scoring rubric consists of fixed scales related to a list of criteria describing performance. Each scale is composed of anchors that describe the various levels of performance complexity. Assigned weights, which give the relative value of each criterion, are used in the process of summating scores to ascertain whether the standard has been met. Rubrics promote learning by offering clear performance targets to students for agreed-upon standards. Rubrics are presented to students along with the performance task.

Standard
The term *standard* is problematic because it means so many things (and, sometimes, nothing). It can be a synonym for *criterion.* It can also mean "a structure providing a base or support," in which case, it is synonymous with *program standards*—the knowledge , skills, and attitudes (or competencies) to be achieved in the program. The most common meaning may be "achievement of the specified program competencies at the level of performance established for successful completion."

- **Content Standards**
  Content standards—also known as *discipline standards*—comprise the knowledge and skills specific to a given discipline. They describe information and skills essential to the practice or application of a particular discipline or content domain.

- **Curriculum or Program Standards**
  Curriculum standards—sometimes referred to as *program standards*—are best described as the goals of classroom instruction. They imply the curricular or instructional activities that might be used to help students develop skill and ability within a given content domain. To a great extent, curriculum standards describe the instructional means to achieve content standards.

Defining Assessment

- **Performance Standard**
  See *Criteria.*

- **Lifelong Learning Standard**
  A lifelong learning standard is not specific to any one discipline and can be used in many situations throughout a person's lifetime. This type of standard is not even specific to academics; it is a skill that can be used in virtually all aspects of life. For example, one lifelong learning standard for students might be, *Make and carry out effective plans.*

Task
A task is a complex activity requiring multiple responses to a challenging question or problem.

Before reading on, reflect on the relationships of the terms. Did you ever have to sort through the relationships of goals, generalizations, and objectives? Do you recall being unsure whether a statement was a goal, a generalization, or an objective? I do. I remember the frustration that went along with it. I expected, neat, clean definitions that everyone would use in the same way. They didn't then and they don't now. Some people use *alternative assessment, authentic assessment,* and *performance assessment* synonymously. There may be times when you see a statement as a standard, someone else may see it as a criterion, and someone else may see it as an outcome. I have tried to clarify how I see the terms relating to one another. Others, however, may ascribe a different "mood" to the terms.

One term that stands out in this list is *authentic assessment.* It stands out because of its contrast to conventional assessment methods and its heavy use in current literature. Although it is not the only model of assessment that addresses the contemporary characterization, it seems to be the prevailing model at this point. Thus, further description is warranted at this point, but let's start by looking at the strengths of your present assessment system.

Defining Assessment

Teacher Activity: What Are the Strengths of My Current Assessment System?

Place a check mark beside the strengths that describe your current assessment system. Add other strengths of your system if they aren't listed here. Place a star beside those strengths you would like your assessment system to have. Reflect on the results of this activity as you plan to implement upcoming assessments. If the strengths of your current system do not match with your desired strengths, set some goals to make changes over time.

My assessment system—

____ Provides interesting, active, lively, and exciting experiences.

____ Examines students in unobtrusive ways within the context of their natural learning environments.

____ Establishes an environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed.

____ Allows me to develop meaningful curricula and assess within the context of that program.

____ Assesses on an ongoing basis in a way that provides a more accurate picture of a student's achievement.

____ Puts the emphasis on a student's strengths; tells what students can do and what they're trying to do.

____ Provides multiple sources of evaluation that give a more accurate view of a student's progress.

____ Treats each student as a unique human being.

____ Provides information that is useful to the learning process.

____ Regards assessment and teaching as two sides of the same coin.

____ Engages the student in a continual process of self-reflection and revision.

____ Results in products that have value to students and others.

____ Deals with processes as much as final products.

____ Includes higher-order thinking skills.

____ Fosters learning for its own sake.

____ Provides students with the time they need to work through a problem, project, or process.

____ Involves creating, interviewing, demonstrating, solving problems, reflecting, sketching, discussing, and engaging in many other active learning tasks.

____ Compares students to their own past performances.

Source: The items on the above checklist were taken from Thomas Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1994), pp. 117-118.

Defining Assessment

Authentic Assessment

You can incorporate the strengths listed in the Teacher Activity by using authentic assessment tasks. Such tasks are designed to do the following or have the following characteristics:

- Ask students to perform, create, produce or do something.
- Require use of intellectual and social skills, including practical problem solving and critical thinking.
- Encourage student self-appraisal.
- Require integration of skills and knowledge.
- Elicit real-world applications.
- Provide criteria for success up front.
- Yield student work samples that require process analysis as well as judgment about the products of learning.
- Provide immediate and specific feedback.
- Engage students in problems and questions of importance and substance in which students must ***use*** knowledge and construct meaning effectively and creatively.
- Simulate the challenges facing workers in a field of study or real-life tests of community and personal life.
- Are nonroutine and multifaceted. Recall is insufficient; authentic tasks require a repertoire of knowledge and good judgment in clarifying and solving problems.
- Focus on the students' ability to produce a quality product and/or performance.
- Involve interactions between the assessor and the student.
- Emphasize the consistency of student work, the assessment of habits.

Comparison of Conventional and Authentic Assessment

Conventional Assessment	Authentic Assessment
Emphasis on end-of-unit or semester test	Integral part of instruction
Annual standardized tests	Ongoing, evolving, cumulative
Separate from instruction	Used to provoke further learning or to inform instruction
Alignment of curriculum and instruction to standardized test	Alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
Paper-and-pencil-oriented	Demonstration-, performance-, and product-oriented; multimethod and multitrait
Recall and memorization	Higher-order thinking ; inquiry
Individual assessment	Collaborative assessment
Test score given to student	Detailed feedback provided to student
Looking for knowledge possessed	Looking for understanding and application of learning; mastery of ongoing processes; mastery of outcomes
Compared students; grades	Mastery of outcomes
Emphasis on grades as reflecting	De-emphasis on grades; emphasis on learning
Teacher tests	Teacher/student/peer appraisals
Teacher-directed	Teacher-facilitated; student self-directs and judges own work
Structured, classroom setting	Real-world setting

Defining Assessment

Incorporating alternative assessment approaches into practice is an evolutionary process. As more and more methods and activities are used, the roles of teacher and students in the assessment process evolve. The shift in roles is evident in the previous lists. As assessment practices become closer to authentic assessment, changes in the roles become dramatic, even revolutionary to some.

Consider the advantages and disadvantages of changing your assessment practice to include more alternative assessment approaches. Envision how your role in assessing students might change or stay the same. Develop a well-reasoned rationale for your vision of yourself as an assessor that you would be willing to share with students and parents.

Defining Assessment

Qualities of Effective Assessment

The goal of alternative assessment is to reduce the gap between what we care about and what we assess.

Effective assessment is derived from an understanding of what should be assessed. Should we assess academic skills? occupational skills? employability skills? What content knowledge? No quality of an assessment will make it effective if what is being assessed has no value to the desired goals.

Deriving what should be assessed is not clean-cut. Numerous reports identify standards that should be assessed; for example:

- *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000.* Washington, DC: Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, U.S. Department of Labor, June 1991.
- Goals 2000: Educate America Act

The Occupational Competency Analysis Profile (OCAP) for Work and Family Life provides direction by identifying the competencies that should be included and, consequently, assessed in Work and Family Life Programs. The OCAP was verified by a panel of experts from business and industry, government agencies, and other relevant civic organizations. An Ohio Vocational Competency Assessment (OVCA) test is administered by the state to assess students' knowledge in relation to the competencies. However, the teacher—in conjunction with an advisory committee, administration, and students—must make a further determination regarding what should be taught, and assessed.

> Given what I want them to learn, what counts as evidence that they understand?

Once it has been determined what should be assessed, the assessment approaches and tools selected must have characteristics that align to what is being assessed. For example, suppose it is determined that *Maintain clothing for self and family*, one of the competencies in the OCAP, should be assessed in the context of family life. Multiple-choice items could be administered to ascertain the student's knowledge. Would that be sufficient assessment? No. Laboratory observation with well-defined expectations could be done. Such assessment would be more aligned to the expected learnings. Still, the laboratory does not represent the context of family life. What about also conducting assessment in the context of student's family life? Whereas the type of assessment tool used and the persons assessing the student may be altered from that used in the classroom, it would be the assessment most closely aligned to the expectation of learning!

Defining Assessment

An effective assessment has the following characteristics:

- The assessment ***represents measurement of meaningful goals***.
- The assessment is ***valid***, that is, a truthful measure of what it is supposed to measure and what was taught. It is aligned to the goals of instruction. The assessment activities involve appropriate and meaningful content (content validity) and concepts (construct validity). The assessment activities match with the level of thinking expected and taught.
- The assessment is ***reliable***, that is, consistently measures the same thing in the same way. For tests, reliability can be statistically established. For alternative assessment, it means that various assessors/observers would record the same thing in the same way each time (interrater reliability).
- The assessment is ***multidimensional***. A variety of assessments provide the best chance for accurate evaluation. It is recommended that at least three types of assessment (triangulation) be used per competency or goal.
- The assessment ***facilitates learning*** by being motivating and informative to students. For alternative assessments, indicators or evidence that the student has attained the competency need to be identified.
- The assessment is ***easy to use***.

A position statement developed for Work and Family Life assessment practices in Ohio reflects many of the qualities of effective assessment:

- Testing is one dimension of an assessment program, not the total program.
- The more comprehensive the assessment system, the more accurate will be the judgments and evaluation of performance.
- Multiple measures over time are needed to assess students' performance effectively.
- Assessment must measure both process and content knowledge and skills.
- The criteria and standards for assessment should be clear to students.
- Assessment tasks should provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their best work. They should not be designed to trick or intimidate.
- Assessment for problem solving should include tasks that require the application of knowledge (in which more than one answer or method may be acceptable) and the use of sound judgment with evidence of reasoning.
- Results of assessment should be timely and clearly communicated to students, teachers, and parents.

Purposes of Assessment

Teacher Activity: Why Do I Assess?

Teachers do student assessments for many reasons. Why do you assess? Before flipping to the next page, list *your* reasons for conducting student assessments. I'm trusting you not to peek! If you do peek, how will you know that the reasons you've listed are really your own? To help make your list thorough, reflect on what is done with assessment information once you've collected it. To whom do you report it? Why? Consider how aggregate students' results are used by yourself or others. Reflect on how you would describe why a specific assessment you've used is important. You can turn the page when you're done.

I assess because—

Purposes of Assessment

Everyone—learners, teachers, administrators and employers—has an interest in conducting assessments. As an integral part of instruction, assessment must be done to determine whether the goals of education are being met. Appropriately aligned assessment determines progress and reveals how improvements can be made toward meeting those goals. Most reasons for assessment are listed below:

At all levels of educational systems, assessment answers the following questions:

- Are we doing what we think we're doing?
- How can we do it better?

For learners, assessment does the following:

- Promotes efficient learning by focusing the student's attention on what is important
- Promotes retention and transfer of learning
- Promotes self-evaluation and self-monitoring by the use of well-defined expectations and criteria
- Motivates learning by communicating progress concerning what a student knows and is able to do
- Shows evidence of work that can be used to get jobs, scholarships, entrance to college

For teachers, assessment does the following:

- Provides formative and summative data about student learning and attainment, specifically competency gain
- Provides diagnostic data to improve learning
- Assists instructional planning by providing informed feedback
- Helps to determine teaching effectiveness—what approaches and methods work
- Helps to determine whether the program is achieving desired goals (program accountability)
- Is a tool for communicating to others

For administrators, assessment does the following:

- Assists in allocation of resources
- Assists in making employee decisions—hiring, professional development needs

For employers, assessment does the following:

- Provides data about what a prospective employee knows and is able to do
- Provides evidence of learning by employees

Purposes of Assessment

Compare the reasons in the previous list to your own reasons. Did you identify all the same reasons? Did you identify others not listed here? Consider how you might strengthen or expand your use of assessment knowledge. For example, combined student data could be used to illustrate program effectiveness to stakeholder groups when marketing your program. Data could be in the form of test information or a set of anonymous comments from alternative assessments.

List ways you plan to improve use of assessment data here.

WHAT SHOULD I DO REGARDING ASSESSMENT?

✓ Connecting Learning and Assessment

The need to integrate learning and assessment is the focus of this section. It describes how contemporary cognitive learning theories have influenced teaching, the role of multiple intelligences, and the use of concurrent multiple assessment techniques.

✓ Reporting and Using Results

This section compares the ways in which assessment results are reported and used in alternative and traditional assessment systems. It also addresses concerns related to assigning grades.

✓ Managing Alternative Assessment

This section will guide you in planning and implementing an assessment system based more on alternative than conventional assessment approaches. The use of selective abandonment will help you determine what might be deleted from your teaching to allow increased time for assessment. The activity helps to focus on what assessments are needed. Teacher time-saving tips are also listed.

Connecting Learning and Assessment

Recent knowledge about learning is dramatically influencing the processes of teaching. Much of the new knowledge relates to how humans think, and it has moved educators away from behavioral models toward cognitive theories of learning, instruction, and assessment. Learning is no longer thought of as a one-way transmission of knowledge from a teacher to students as manifested by the prevalence of lectures and the reiteration of knowledge by testing. Rather, effective teaching is thought of as a process that actively engages students in the processes of learning. Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters (1992, pp. 14-16) describe five new views of learning from cognitive theories that, along with societal trends and demands, are shaping the directions for education:

- ***Learning has an active nature.*** Learning is not simply a matter of receiving factual information. Learning is constructed and self-regulated and is built on past knowledge. Unique understandings are created through reflection. Thus, understanding how a student organizes, structures, and uses information to solve problems, for example, is central to assessment.
- ***Learning is not linear.*** Teaching bits and piece of information and then moving on to higher-level thinking skills, placed in discrete hierarchical order, has been clearly discounted as a means for effective learning. People of all ages and developmental levels constantly use and refine concepts with complex thinking processes. Focusing on drill and practice related to isolated facts is a disservice to students. Such teaching approaches may make it harder for some students to apply skills to real-world problems. Now, learning is perceived as an ongoing process of receiving information and internally organizing it by connecting it to what is already known, forming what are called "mental models."
- ***Learners are multitalented.*** There is growing recognition of the tremendous variety in the learning modes people use and the speed at which people learn. Intelligence is no longer thought of as a single descriptor of a person's capability. Rather, multiple intelligences exist within a person that relate to verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and other abilities. So that all students can learn, both teaching and assessing need to allow for this variety of intelligences.
- ***Learning includes cognition, metacognition, and affect.*** Acquisition of knowledge and skills does not happen in isolation of the person. Metacognition (thinking about thinking) and the affect (feelings, emotions) of the learner are precursors to acquisition and also will determine how the learner organizes the information, if at all. Motivation and self-esteem affect learning and performance. For teaching and assessing, this means that learners need models of exemplary performance and encouragement to reflect on their own processes of learning. From this view, meaningful learning is recognized as intrinsically motivating. Some research suggests that extrinsic motivators for learning, such as grades, may even reduce the intrinsic motivators to learn.

Connecting Learning and Assessment

- ***Learning has a social context.*** Independent work has predominated in our educational systems, in contrast to the way people work and learn in real-world settings. Clearly, group work and teamwork facilitate learning by providing help, reflection, and feedback during the learning process. Assessment must include skills related to working in groups.

The problem-solving model for the Work and Family Life resource guides supports implementation of teaching in these new directions. As you create new assessments, reflecting on these directions might expand your thinking or clarify how and why you might choose to focus on specific learning goals and competencies.

Reporting and Using Results

> "As authentic instruction and assessment lead us into the twenty-first century, we must not permit grading and reporting of student progress to lag very far behind."
> Baron and Boschee, 1995, p. 77

Baron and Boschee (1995, p. 77) note that there is transition in classrooms from a teacher-centered ***testing culture*** to a collaborative ***assessment culture***. Reflecting this change is the challenge to teachers to report and use results of assessment differently. It means moving away from individual learning for test results to multiple forms of assessment that is oftentimes blurred with learning.

One of the most troublesome aspects of this shift for both teachers and educational systems is the assignment of grades. Many proponents of alternative teaching and assessment approaches contend that assigning grades is at odds with their undergirding philosophies. Although this may be true, grades are still a fundamental part of schooling and the reporting of student learning.

Assigning grades cannot at present be avoided.

With conventional assessment approaches, student work (primarily paper-pencil measures) is evaluated in a linear fashion, one activity at time, and somehow grades are averaged to assign a single grade for the total work for a period. Typically, grading is norm-referenced (test scores achieved by students in a group are compared and, sometimes, curved), and somewhat-subjective evaluations are made on some work, such as essays.

In many alternative assessment approaches, the central idea underlying assessment is judgments about ***competence***—being able to do something well. Assessment is criterion-referenced—student performance is compared to predetermined expectations or criteria, not to the performance of other students. Although conventional assessment approaches remain useful, they are seen as only a part of assessing a student's ability to perform. And teachers must ensure that all assessment approaches and tools—whether conventional or alternative—are of high quality.

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Reporting and Using Results

Assigning Grades

Assignment of student grades should reflect evidence of demonstrated achievement of the identified goals, outcomes, or competencies. Regardless of the method used, it is generally agreed that grading and reporting remain inherently subjective. To maximize the objectivity of the effort, Baron and Boschee (1995, p. 78) suggest that multiple validations of authentic tasks, portfolios, and secured tasks (tasks done in controlled conditions) be used to collect evidence for assigning grades. The relative value to assigning grades based on these approaches depends on the overall purpose of the assessment (e.g., to show interim progress, assign course grades, justify grade-level promotions). Use of scoring rubrics (see samples, pp. 108-111) with these types of assessments provides meaningful information for students and helps their understanding of what a specific grade means.

Baron and Boschee (1995, p. 79) consider it reasonable to approximate overall performance by assigning a grade to a competency by averaging scores from multiple assessments. They caution that the context in which the average value is created must be carefully interpreted in assigning a grade.

As you modify your grading system to include more alternative assessments, the approach you finally settle on for combining the scores of individual assessments should possess these characteristics:

- The student's work should be compared to predetermined and well-communicated standards and criteria.
- The performance of one student relative to other students should have no bearing on awarding a grade.
- The time it takes a student to achieve a competency should ***not*** be given a heavy weight. In most instances, it's performance, not time, that counts.
- Understanding of the grading system must be an up-front process for students. For example, from the outset of the grading period, students must know that an "A" means that a student earned the highest possible score on all or almost all competency assessments completed during a time period. In contrast, an "F" might mean that the student demonstrated an acceptable level of achievement on few or no competency assessments.
- Grades should be based primarily on students' ability to demonstrate achievement of important competencies.

If your grading system conforms to these characteristics, it is likely that it will be appropriate for alternative assessment approaches. Further, your grading system will be more defensible and more fair and motivating to students.

Reporting and Using Results

Reporting Results

Reporting the results of assessments can take many forms beyond the traditional procedures such as transcripts and grade cards. Educational systems are being pressed to address the fact that traditional procedures fail to address the performance approaches to assessment. Alternative assessment results can be reported through learner profiles, portfolios, Ohio's Career Passports, and credentialling processes.

Learner profiles provide relevant information about competency attainment through systematic record keeping. Profiles typically contain three types of frequently updated information: student achievements, experiences, and interests. Developed jointly with the student, a profile can provide the basis for developing other documents for communicating competence.

Using ***portfolios*** to report results is discussed on pp. 85-97.

Ohio's Career Passports are another effective device for reporting a variety of assessment results—both conventional and alternative—and for sharing that information with potential employers as proof of demonstrated abilities and accomplishments. Performance assessment results are provided through the identification of the occupational competencies a student has mastered based on the program OCAP. Each OCAP (Occupational Competency Analysis Profile) lists the competencies verified by business and industry as critical for entry into a given occupation. Career Passports may also include grade transcripts, résumés, letters of recommendation, certificates of achievement, and other career credentials.

Credentialling is a process in which outside organizations award certificates for recognition of competence. It is a process that is growing in popularity.

Managing Alternative Assessment

Teacher Activity: Reflecting on Learning Goals

1. **Develop four or five significant goals of learning to be met by your students at the end of a selected unit or course.**

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

   e.

2. **Examine the course of study, syllabus, or curriculum guide for the selected unit or course. Practice "selective abandonment" by eliminating those elements that do not relate to the significant goals you developed. Identify the elements that contribute to those goals. List below the elements to be eliminated and kept.**

   Class Name or Content:

What can you eliminate?	*What should you keep?*

3. **Reflect on how you feel about abandoning those instructional elements. In what ways would their elimination help you do a better job with the elements you have left? Compare your list with that of a colleague who teaches the same material to see if you both agree on what should stay and what should go. Discuss your decisions. Your advisory committee could also be used to help you abandon particular units or lessons.**

Managing Alternative Assessment

Planning and Implementing Alternative Assessments

Planning to incorporate alternative assessments begins with finding time to do so. Remember that "giving up" instructional time and incorporating more time for assessment does not equate to less learning and more testing. Assessment is an inherent part of instruction; students need frequent feedback on their performance as they progress through the program.

Initially, planning more alternative assessments and integrating them into a program becomes more complicated and time-consuming as you move closer and closer to the extensive use of authentic assessments approaches. Changing just one assessment may not be that involved. As you grow increasingly successful, you will probably see a new role for yourself that relates more to being a manager of the assessment system, rather than its sole executor. As you plan to make substantive changes, consider the following questions:

- Are the changes doable and sustainable?
- How can the changes be made incrementally so as not to be overwhelming?
- What resources will be needed?
- Who will be affected by the changes? Parents? Students? Administrators and supervisors? Community members?
- What will I have to do to garner support from key persons? Will I need to develop my position statement regarding assessment into a marketing tool to "sell" the changes?
- Who will be involved in creating assessments?
- Who will be involved in assessing students?
- How will grading and reporting change?
- How will I effectively manage the system?
- Are there any current policies and mandates that support or discourage the desired changes?
- How can technology be used to make the changes easier to accomplish and sustain?

Managing Alternative Assessment

Tips for Managing an Assessment System

The following guidelines will help you as you attempt to manage the modification and implementation of your assessment system:

- Don't tackle your whole assessment system at one time. Start out by revising one assessment to an alternative approach.
- Find at least one other teacher (more if possible) who is also interested in alternative assessment and who is willing to co-investigate with you. Doing so will make your task easier, and the results should have greater credibility. Don't set an unrealistic agenda for change.
- Incorporate students into the process of developing assessment tasks. They can learn as they develop an assessment tool, plus their involvement builds student motivation for assessment.
- Use the work of your best students to generate criteria and indicators.
- Don't worry about ***perfect***. Many times ***good*** is enough.
- Use technology. For example, develop (or have someone else develop) computer templates for creating rubrics and other scoring devices. Fill in the tasks, standards, criteria, indicators, weights, etc., as each device is developed. This prevents the need to design each device uniquely.
- Remember that up-front work on assessment makes the job faster and easier in the end.

WHAT TOOLS SHOULD I USE FOR ASSESSING LEARNING?

✓ Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

This section identifies four categories of assessment of tools: tests, product/project assessments, performance assessments, and process skills assessments. An extensive list of assessment tools is presented by category, and appropriate uses of each category of assessments are described.

✓ Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Specific information about and/or sample handouts for the following approaches and tools are presented in this section:

- Conferences and Interviews 57
- Decision-Making Matrices 63
- Graphic Organizers 67
- Class or Group Discussion 75
- Journals and Learning Logs 77
- Observations 81
- Portfolios 85
- Questioning 99
- Rubrics 103
- Scoring Sheets 113

NOTE: *Balancing Work and Family: Curriculum Addendum* (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Board of Education, 1995) served as the basis for development of these two sections. Some material was taken directly from the Kansas *Addendum*, but much of the material used has been edited or adapted to Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences Programs based on the comments made by teachers who reviewed the draft of this manual. Special appreciation is extended to Linda Johnson, Program Consultant for the Kansas State Board of Education; and Carolyn Corwin, Kansas Curriculum Project Coordinator, for granting use of substantive portions of the *Addendum*.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Types of Assessments

Assessments can be classified into four categories: tests, product/project assessments, performance assessments, and process skills assessments. All types are useful; however, each has limitations. ***Therefore, maintaining a balance becomes of utmost importance.***

The chart that follows presents a wide range of assessment ideas from which you can choose in devising your assessment system. The left column lists the test devices traditionally used to assess knowledge. The items in the remaining columns are primarily assessment activities rather than devices—the basis for authentic measurement. Students demonstrate knowledge and skills through performance of authentic tasks. Assessment of their performance would be done using such devices as checklists or rating scales or rubrics, which will be discussed in the final section of this guide. In some cases, particularly in the right-hand column, some assessment devices are listed in amongst the assessment activities. This is because the line between learning activities and assessment activities ideally should be nonexistent. A student watching another student complete a process could use an observation checklist to assess the peer's performance. The student observer and his/her peer are both learning and assessing. The functions are simultaneous and inseparable.

Please note that this is just an idea list; it is not the intent of this guide to provide in-depth information about each of the items listed. For inservice teachers, many, if not most, of these activities and devices are probably already familiar to you. For preservice teachers, if you haven't covered some of these items and would like more information, check in the library or ask your teacher educators.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Assessment Ideas for Individuals and Groups

Tests	Products/Projects	Performances	Process Skills
Essay Multiple-choice Matching Short answer True/False	Ads Advice columns Artifacts Audiocassettes Autobiographies Banners Blueprints Book reviews Books Brochures Bulletin boards Cartoons Case studies Collages Computer creations Costumes of characters Crossword puzzles Databases Diaries of historical periods Directories Displays Drawings Foods of a country or time period Games Graphs, charts, diagrams Graphic organizers Handbooks How-to books In-class group essays Job applications Job descriptions Journals Lab reports Learning centers Learning logs Letters to parents, editor, TV station, or a business	Activities Announcements Anthems Apologies Ballads Beauty tips Campaign speeches Character sketches Charades Classroom maps Commercials Conferences Cooperative learning group activities Dances Debates Demonstrations Discussions Dramas Exercise routines Experiments Explanations Fashion shows Field trips Interactive book reviews Interviews Introductions Jingles Job interviews Jump-rope rhymes Laboratory experiences Person-on-the-street interviews News reports Oral histories of events Pantomimes Plays Presentations Psychomotor skills	Anecdotal records Checklist observations for processes Concept mapping Conferences—teacher and peer Debriefing interviews Debriefing questioning for lesson closure Experiences checklists Interactional analyses Interviews Invented dialogs Journal entries regarding processes Learning logs Metaphor analyses Observations Oral questioning Process-folios Question production Responses to reading Retelling in own words Tailored responses Telling how they did something and justifying the approach used

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Tests	Products/Projects	Performances	Process Skills
	Maps "Me Bag" for introductions Mobiles Models Movie reviews Newspapers for historical periods Pamphlets Parenting job descriptions Patterns Peer editing critiques Pen-pal letters Photographs Picture dictionaries Portfolios Posters Product descriptions Projects Proposals Protest letters Questionnaires Research centers Research papers Results of surveys Résumés Reviews of TV programs Scrapbooks Short stories Simulation games Slide presentations Soap opera parodies Story illustrations Student-kept charts Tests Timelines Travel folders Videotapes Want ads Work products Writing portfolios	Puppet shows Reports Role plays Sales pitches Simulations Singing of songs from historical periods Skits Sociograms Song writing to fit a topic Speeches Spoofs Storytelling Surveys Tongue twisters TV talk shows Verbal comparisons Warnings Weather reports	

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Tests

For information on how to improve your proficiency with paper-pencil testing, a good source is *Assessing Learning* by Lowell Hedges, which is available through Ohio's Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory. It also contains additional information about alternative assessments, particularly performance testing.

Product/Project Assessments

A project can be an assessment task given to an individual student or a group of students on a topic related to the curriculum. The project results in a product that is assessed. The processes used during the project could also be assessed. The project may involve both in-class and out-of-class research and development. The project should be primarily a learning experience, not solely an assessment task.

Projects have always been a part of the curriculum. The elementary school curriculum is full of projects. Unfortunately, in high school the number of creative projects decreases, while the number of written research papers and multiple-choice tests increases.

A great deal of time and effort goes into producing a quality product from a project assessment task. Therefore, teachers should allow some class time to work on the project. The complexity of the project will determine the time allotment required. Also, the criteria for evaluation should be determined before starting the project by the teacher and students working together.

Burke (1994) identifies the following advantages of project assessment tasks:

1. Allow the students to formulate their own questions and then try to find answers to them
2. Provide students with opportunities to use their multiple intelligences to create a product
3. Allow teachers to assign projects at different levels of difficulty to account for individual learning styles and ability levels
4. Can be motivating to students
5. Provide an opportunity for positive interaction and collaboration among peers
6. Provide an alternative for students who have problems reading and writing
7. Increase the self-esteem of students who would not get recognition on tests or traditional writing assignments
8. Allow for students to share their learning and accomplishments with other students, classes, parents, or community members
9. Can achieve essential learning outcomes through application and transfer

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Teachers who want students to ***produce*** something themselves, rather than just ***reproduce*** knowledge on tests, incorporate meaningful projects into their classes. Projects assist students in developing organizational skills, problem-solving and decision-making skills, interpersonal and communication skills, technical skills—all significant learner outcomes.

Performance Assessments

Performances in which students exhibit what they can ***do*** can be assessment tasks. Performance tasks genuinely reflect whether students really know how to demonstrate what they have learned.

Performances (and products) are applications and demonstrations of learning and should be an integral part of the learning and transfer process. Business leaders have been critical of the educational system because they see many students entering the work force with a knowledge base of facts they have memorized in school, but without the ability to perform the tasks necessary for the job. Likewise, this is happening in the family. Students may read, study, and know about how to function effectively in a family, but they do not have the skills to put that knowledge or "how-to" into action. They cannot transfer their knowledge of the skills to the application and demonstration of the skills.

Asking students to perform is not a new educational strategy; teachers have been assigning performances for years. However, in many instances, the assessment criteria were not identified in writing and shared with the students. Thus, the performance often remained an isolated activity without much meaning for students or much carry-over to real life. The teacher knew and understood the desired outcomes, but students often missed the connections between the knowledge learned, the performance exhibited, and the transfer to real life. Likewise, without identified criteria, many teachers avoided assigning performance tasks because they were more difficult to grade—more subjective than objective-style tests—and took longer to observe and evaluate.

One of the key steps in designing performance exhibitions is to imagine what the performance should look like—delineating exactly what a good performance looks like, and telling students exactly what is required of them. This must be presented ***before*** any work is started. Students should be informed of the content to be covered; skills to be learned, applied, and mastered; and the behaviors they will be expected to exhibit publicly (in class, school, home, community).

When performance tasks are used effectively, students are more motivated to get involved and take ownership of their learning process. Performance tasks encourage the students to make decisions, collaborate, use oral and written communication, access

information, use higher-order thinking skills, problem-solve, exhibit persistence, appreciate differences in value systems, and resolve conflicts. Such tasks also allow students to reflect on whether they really know what they have been taught.

Implementation Guidelines

As you begin to implement the performance assessments and exhibitions you devise, keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Make sure the performance task is in alignment with meaningful learner outcomes.
2. Explain to students why they will be doing the performance task, and identify the intended goals.
3. Model or show examples or video performances of *good* and *not-so-good* real-life performances.
4. Work with students to brainstorm a list of criteria that make up this performance. Have students list descriptors of what this performance would *look like* and *sound like*. Select the three or four main criteria or combine smaller descriptors to make a larger category/descriptor.
5. Generate with the students a list of indicators that further define the behaviors for each criterion.
6. Create a scale that places the indicators into levels of proficiency. The levels may be descriptive; for example:
   - *novice, proficient, exemplary*
   - *novice, apprentice, proficient, distinguished*
   - *not yet, developing, achieved*
   - *try again, proficient, exemplary*

   The levels may also be designated with numbers, usually ranging from 0 or 1 to no more than 7.
7. Give students and/or teams some choice in their selection of topics.
8. Encourage students to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their use of various process skills while preparing for and presenting the performance.
9. Have students present the performance in class to class members and/or an audience from the "outside." The student may also "take" their performance outside the school to a location in the community.
10. Ask peers to evaluate the performance.
11. Have student self-evaluate by viewing a videotape of the performance.
12. Use criteria to complete a teacher evaluation, and conduct a conference with the student to discuss both the performance and the evaluations.
13. Have students reflect on the performance results and set new goals for the next performance.
14. Keep the performance rubrics, videotape, and list of future goals, and include them in the student's portfolio.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Process Skills Assessments

Process skills assessment refers to the assessment of a student's ability to use generic foundational skills to progress through a series of actions or operations. Process skills that teachers seek to assess relate to thinking abilities, applications of procedural knowledge, and interactions with others. Some examples of process skills are critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, goal setting, cooperation, relating to others, leadership, and management. Before process skills can be assessed, they must be tangible or observable.

A Rationale for Focusing on Process Skills

In most classrooms, there are things that teachers want their students to be able to ***do***—instances in which the measure of attainment is the student's ability to demonstrate certain kinds of behaviors through a ***performance*** or a ***production***. Success lies in "doing well." To do so, two conditions are necessary. The student must master the specific prerequisite content and procedural knowledge. And, the student must possess the process skills required to use the knowledge appropriately in the performance or production. In other words, process skills are the foundation of ***doing***—the base upon which to build competencies specific to a discipline.

By teaching and assessing process skills, you help students develop the life skills necessary for a productive and responsible life inside and outside the school setting. Many of the challenges students face are unknown, and it would be foolish to think that the school could provide them with everything they need to know as they move into the future. That is why it is important to give them process skills that will empower them in any situation that might confront them.

Process skills are the key to students' ability to thrive in the twenty-first century. Imagine what our society would look like if each family had at least one leader who could manage work and family responsibilities—clarifying the issues that are of concern to that family; using planning processes and goal setting to make each decision or solve each problem; and after making the plan, addressing the issues by working cooperatively. Imagine what our schools and workplaces would look like if each person could relate to others in positive, caring ways and cooperate with others to establish and achieve group goals.

Teaching and assessing process skills go hand in hand.

Success for students comes from learning different types of process skills first. Teaching process before teaching content to younger students makes it possible for them to think more clearly, consider many sides in decision making, and plan projects. Then, as the

teacher introduces content, the student will learn faster, be much more productive, and use time more wisely. With older students, the process evolves to a more sophisticated level. Students with good process skills are able to learn, apply, and evaluate content as they utilize the process skills. The synergism of using a variety of processes and content will equal total learning that is greater that the sum of the parts. Thus, the teaching of process skills must be the focus of any relevant curriculum, and the process skills must be assessed concurrently. For process skills, effective teaching not only requires that instruction and assessment be integrated, but that instruction and assessment be inextricably tied.

Elements That Encourage Process Skills in tha Classroom

Four essential elements encourage the use of process skills in the classroom: climate, explicitness, structured interactions, and process skills processing:

- ***Climate***: Setting a safe classroom climate by modeling openness to learning, risk taking, tolerance for failure, and acceptance; arranging the room to promote interaction and openness; integrating principles of motivation, reinforcement, and transfer; and creating an atmosphere of high expectations.
- ***Explicitness***: Teaching the process skill explicitly to students by defining terms and stating the objective; varying teaching style; providing guided practice with conscientious monitoring and feedback; and bridging skill application into relevant real-life situations.
- ***Structured Interactions***: Getting students to process the information in flexible and varied groups; providing clear rules, objectives, and assigned roles and responsibilities; responding and interacting with the material in experiential activities; fostering cooperative effort and accountability; modeling of the teacher as a participant; and facilitating reflection on the process skills.
- ***Process Skills Processing***: Getting students to think about the use of process skills; deliberately bringing their patterns of process skills usage to a conscious level; helping them track their patterns of processing by asking them to verbalize how they did what they did; allowing reflective thinking and writing time; helping them make the connections between new learning and past experiences; providing visual frameworks and asking higher-level questions; and guiding them to extend new learning into relevant situations both in and out of the classroom.

Teachable Moments

There are three teachable moments when processing (and assessing) process skills is most effective and will enhance the lesson: anticipatory set, checking for understanding, and closure.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

- ***Anticipatory Set***: Also called *advanced organizer*, this "moment" describes the thinking that goes on in the student's mind when you focus the student's attention on the lesson objective. The organizer helps the student quickly review (mentally) the related material or experiences and start to make connections.
- ***Checking for Understanding***: All students should be encouraged to take time to think about the process skills they are learning and practicing. You need to seek out simple responses, attending to the perceived low performers and waiting after asking higher-order questions. As the occasion demands, you need to check for application, analysis, and evaluation. Through guided discussion, students can discover how the process skill is related to other process skills and the application of the skill to real-life situations.
- ***Closure***: If we consider each lesson to have three parts—what, so what, and now what—we can consider the importance of closure. In the ***what*** phase of the lesson, students give evidence that they understand the critical pieces of the lesson. They should be able to restate the objective or purpose for the lesson in their own words based on the information acquired during the lesson. In the ***so what*** part of the lesson, students should stop to make personal application. This is when they discover the meaning of what was taught by linking the new learning to past learning, associating it with their thoughts and feelings, and considering it in the larger context of the course and their own lives. In the ***now what*** part of the lesson, the students make the information come alive as they investigate applications and project the new learning into present and future situations. The abstract ideas become practical, usable ideas. This brings the student's thinking into final focus or closure.

Suggested Steps When Teaching Process Skills

The following nine steps will help you plan and structure your teaching of process skills:

1. Select a process skill.
2. Develop a definition of the process skill with the students, using their own wording.
3. Identify what the process skill looks like and sounds like.
4. Cite a concrete example of an application of the skill. Have students think of other applications.
5. List appropriate instances in which the skill is used.
6. Outline the operations used to perform the skill. Then, use a word symbolic of the skill and rewrite the operations in the form of an acronym.
7. Develop graphic organizers that provide an aid in using the skill (see pp. 70-71 for examples).
8. Develop a sample process skill lesson using subject-matter content.
9. Think of further applications in school and in life.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Development of Process Skill Indicators

Each Work and Family Life resource guide focuses on the development on four *process competencies*. Each process competency encompasses several *process skills*, and in some instances, a process skill overlaps two or more competencies. Although the process competencies are the same in each resource guide, the application of skills varies according to the context of the guide. The Work and Family Life process competencies are as follows:

Process Competency 1:	Manage work and family responsibilities for the well-being of self and others.
Process Competency 2:	Apply problem-solving process to personal and family problems for the well-being of self and others.
Process Competency 3:	Relate to others in positive, caring ways.
Process Competency 4:	Assume a leadership role as a responsible family member and citizen.

The process competencies are further described in the resource guides by stating competency builders, which can be thought of as criteria and/or indicators. However, further elaboration of criteria and/or indicators is needed for effective assessment of the process skills related to the process competencies. The following lists offer additional selections you may choose from when developing assessment tools (checklists, rubrics, etc.) to assess some process skills that relate to the competencies. In some cases, the skill is followed by a single list of indicators; in other cases, the indicators for a skill have been clustered under the steps typically performed in relation to the skill.

This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, nor should you think you need to include all the indicators for a specific skill on your checklist. The purpose of the list is to assist you in selecting those criteria and indicators that "fit" your stated goals and targeted skills and getting ideas for generating your own indicators. Consider this list a starting point.

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Process Competency 1: Manage work and family responsibilities for the well-being of self and others.

Process Skill: Managing work

- Takes initiative
- Organizes time well
- Uses time well
- Gets work done on time
- Shows patience
- Revises work
- Uses a variety of information-gathering techniques
- Uses resources effectively
- Measures the value of information accurately
- Organizes self and project work
- Works toward goal achievement
- Works efficiently
- Works effectively
- Makes plans
- Follows the plans made
- Exhibits self-motivation strategies
- Sticks with a job until completed
- Knows how to do things or finds out how to do them
- Manages stress effectively
- Manages time effectively
- Exhibits flexibility

Process Competency 2: Apply problem-solving process to personal and family problems for the well-being of self and others.

Process Skill: Using creative thinking

- Brainstorms
- Generalizes
- Hypothesizes
- Invents
- Makes analogies
- Deals with ambiguity
- Personifies
- Deals with paradox
- Predicts
- Visualizes
- Associates relationships
- Infers

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Process Skill: Using critical thinking

- Seeks a statement of the question
- Seeks reasons and explanations when needed
- Acts purposefully to be well informed
- Uses credible sources of information
- Keeps thinking relevant and to the point
- Keeps the original issue clearly in mind
- Considers points of view other than own
- Disagrees without letting disagreement interfere with reasoning
- Withholds judgment when evidence is insufficient
- Takes a position but changes it when evidence requires it
- Brings order to complex parts
- Exhibits sensitivity to others' feelings, levels of knowledge, and degree of sophistication
- Clarifies issues
- Analyzes information related to each issue
- Develops positions
- Draws conclusions based on data
- Develops ideas and alternatives
- Understands consequences of own position
- Determines cause and effect
- Analyzes for bias
- Analyzes for assumptions
- Perseveres when trying to solve problems, answer questions, or complete assignments
- Tries alternative strategies if initial strategies don't succeed
- Analyzes problems systematically, following a logical sequence of steps
- Thinks before answering questions
- Takes time to understand instructions before beginning an assignment
- Plans steps for task or action
- Exhibits comfort with ambiguity
- Evaluates consequences of different actions
- Identifies problems independently
- Exhibits accuracy
- Takes pride in quality of work
- Rechecks answers
- Recognizes the importance of relating prior knowledge to new concepts
- Uses previous knowledge and experience in the course of learning
- Uses precise language to describe things/processes
- Finds answers on own

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Process Skills: Making decisions and solving problems

Finds facts
- Gathers data in preparation for defining the problem
- Identifies the problem by asking questions

Finds problem
- Reads carefully to clarify understanding of the problem before beginning
- Analyzes problematic areas in order to pick out and point up the problem to be attacked
- Gathers data

Finds idea
- Produces ideas/solutions
- Modifies ideas
- Rearranges ideas
- Combines ideas
- Adapts ideas
- Substitutes ideas
- Reverses ideas

Finds solution
- Establishes criteria
- Evaluates criteria
- Verifies criteria
- Tests criteria

Carries out solution
- Develops plan of solution
- Implements plan of solution
- Seeks the acceptance of others

Manages decision-making and problem-solving processes
- Plans agenda directed to finding a solution
- Keeps on track
- Breaks down big problems into bite-sized chunks
- Completes each step before moving to the next
- Returns to the previous step if progress bogs down
- Trusts each process as long as it works
- Includes all people affected
- Considers divergent ideas as valuable input
- Integrates all views and feelings
- Writes down thoughts, suggestions, and input
- Knows which questions to ask at each step
- Draws out complete answers from all present
- Disciplines self to listen and respond
- Persists on a problem a long time before giving up
- Habitually checks what has been accomplished thus far
- Tries to visualize whether something might work
- Tests solutions to see whether they work
- Checks to see if the answer is consistent with the question/problem
- Uses all relevant information to solve the problem

Process Skill: Solving problems in teams

Works cooperatively to identify the problem
Contributes ideas
Respects the ideas of others
Listens to other team members
Asks questions to clarify what was said
Uses all available resources to gather information about the problem
Checks the reliability of the information to describe the problem in detail
Asks who, what, when, where, why, and how
Considers all appropriate factors
Analyzes the problem for cause and effect
Uses brainstorming techniques
Uses block-busting techniques
Outlines the problem
Breaks the problem down into smaller parts
Describes possible solutions in enough detail to be able to select a solution to be tested
Works cooperatively to reach consensus
Develops written problem statements
Tests a solution by finding its weaknesses
Tests a solution by describing it to someone familiar with the problem
Discusses test results so that others will know what was done and what resulted
Judges results using a list of what is important to self and others

Process Competency 3: Relate to others in positive, caring ways.

Process Skill: Resolving conflicts

Disagrees with the idea—not the person
Respects the opinions of others
Thinks for self
Explores different points of view
Negotiates and/or compromises
Reaches consensus

Process Skill: Using constructive communication

Listens attentively to the ideas, opinions, and feelings of others
Acknowledges the person who is speaking with full attention and eye contact
Withholds own comments, opinions, and need to talk until appropriate times
Clarifies misunderstandings
Paraphrases key words to encourage the speaker
Affirms through body language that the speaker has been heard
Gives feedback to others
Identifies conflicts
Resolves conflicts
Encourages others through thoughtful language and statements of appreciation
Avoids sarcasm, put-downs, and hurtful language
Listens without interrupting

Process Competency 4: Assume a leadership role as a responsible family member and citizen.

Process Skill: Cooperating in a group

Formation of teams

- Forms teams quietly
- Sits eyeball to eyeball
- Makes eye contact
- Shares materials
- Follows role assignments

Contribution to group maintenance

- Checks for understanding
- Offers help
- Asks the group for help
- Encourages others
- Energizes the group
- Disagrees with idea—not the person

Communication

- Uses a low voice
- Takes turns
- Makes sure everyone speaks
- Waits until speaker is finished before speaking

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Fulfillment of individual responsibility to the team
- Contributes ideas, opinions, and feelings
- Gives compliments and statements of appreciation
- Accepts compliments and statements of appreciation
- Supports others
- Participates actively and equally
- Completes assigned tasks
- Thinks critically and constructively
- Uses effective time management skills

Assessment and reflection
- Gives feedback about team progress and results
- Analyzes outcomes
- Finds out whether the goal was reached
- Determines strengths of cooperative skills and areas needing improvement

Task completion and assessment
- Works toward achievement of group goals
- Provides feedback to team members
- Uses time effectively

Teamwork
- Sets mutual goals
- Accepts responsibility for achieving goals set
- Plans projects, activities, and celebrations
- Shares materials, information, ideas, and tasks
- Identifies problems
- Solves problems
- Makes responsible decisions through consensus
- Celebrates improvements and achievements
- Shows mutual respect for the diversity of ideas and people

Process Skill: Assuming leadership

Involves others in making decisions
Cooperates with team members
Gives honest and constructive feedback
Listens attentively and with an open mind
Sets ground rules for participation
Assigns group roles in meetings
Stimulates group creativity
Speaks directly
Confronts problems
Solves problems
Seeks agreement on divergent positions
Tests for consensus as points are agreed upon
Acknowledges mistakes

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Exhibits enthusiasm
Exhibits a positive attitude
Gives followers a sense of ownership
Encourages others
Follows through on agreements made
Handles pressure
Acknowledges others' contributions and accomplishments
Participates in democratic process with team members
Takes action
Defends a position when warranted
Assigns work roles based on team members' strengths, interests, and growth potential
Promotes team effort
Delegates work
Assigns responsibility for action as appropriate
Expresses high expectations for team members
Learns from mistakes
Makes timely decisions
Involves team in goal setting
Plans projects and meetings
Organizes projects and activities of team members
Establishes timetables
Examines alternatives
Formulates procedures
Seeks input
Determines standards of performance
Considers the future
Anticipates needs
Seeks responsibility
Commits to a plan of action
Accepts challenge
Uses effective communication skills
Supports team members
Identifies necessary resources
Establishes project objectives
Receives compliments graciously
Sets short- and long-term goals
Motivates team members
Handles conflicts

Overview of Alternative Assessment Approaches

Process Skill: Setting goals

- Establishes project goals
- Establishes personal goals
- States goals in own words
- Breaks project work down into short-term goals or steps
- Determines standards for each step
- Determines the proper sequence for completing the steps
- Chooses strategies for achieving goals
- Considers time, energy, and resources when setting goals
- Identifies necessary resources
- Sets goals that are measurable
- Exhibits flexibility when goals need to be revised
- Puts goals in writing
- Develops a plan of action
- Sets a workable timetable
- Checks progress regularly
- Revises short-term goals as needed
- Rewards progress made toward goal-achievement
- Identifies barriers to goal-achievement
- Perseveres in difficult situations
- Pushes to reach potential
- Restrains impulsiveness
- Exhibits willingness to take calculated risks

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

In this section, we are going to be looking at some of the tools you can use for alternative assessment. How, you may ask, do these tools relate to the assessment ideas presented in the chart in the previous section? Good question. The chart listed four categories: tests, products/projects, performances, and process skills. The devices in this section pertain primarily to the last three categories. Testing, which is a traditional method, is not the focus of this manual.

The short answer to your question is that, in general, most of the tools in this section can probably be applied equally well to all three categories. Rubrics, for example, may be created to assess collages (a product or project), debates (a performance), or concept mapping (a process). Thus, it is important for you to become familiar with the full range of assessment tools. In that way, as you devise your classroom activities, you can select the tool or tools most appropriate and most likely to ensure that assessment is efficient and effective.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Conferences and Interviews

Conferences and interviews—whether formal or informal—can provide a dimension of assessment that is not available through other means. It is during these face-to-face sessions that students can get qualitative feedback on their ideas concerning products/projects, performances, and/or process skills—whether in the planning, development, or final stages. One advantage of these tools is that the feedback they provide is both immediate and direct.

Additional benefits of conducting conferences and interviews with a student are that they—

- reinforce that outcomes have been met;
- help clarify thinking;
- reveal information to the teacher indicating the student's level of understanding;
- help the student to think about his or her own learning;
- expand the student's ability to verbalize his or her learning;
- facilitate self-evaluation;
- make the student feel that his or her ideas and opinions are valued;
- help determine where and when problems are occurring;
- help the student appreciate progress and set future goals;
- provide an opportunity for the student to ask and respond to higher-order questions;
- build positive teacher-student relations; and
- lead the student to become a self-directed learner.

Types of Conferences and Interviews

You might choose to use conferences and interviews to focus on content such as the following:

- Discussion of a community or school service project
- Discussion of a group or individual project
- Reactions to assemblies or guest speakers
- Selection of what will go in the student's portfolio
- Feedback regarding a field trip
- Discussion of student's future goals
- Reactions to a film or video
- Discussion about the dynamics of the student's team (or you can meet with the whole team)
- Discussion about problem solving
- Discussion regarding a performance

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Example: The Project Interview

When interviewing students as they begin to plan projects, you could ask questions such as the following:

- What are you planning to do in this project?
- Tell me why you decided to do your project on this topic.
- Why do you think the project you selected is important?
- Is anyone else going to help you? If yes, who, and in what capacity will they help you?
- Can you speculate about how this project is relevant to life?
- What skills or knowledge from other subject areas will you need to use to complete this project?
- Do you need my help? your team's help? In what ways?

Two sample tools for use with conferences are provided on the following pages:

- **Peer Assessment Conference on Performance**

  This form is designed to provide students with feedback on a performance. The form may be used to critique the final or "finished" performance. Or, the performance critiqued can be in the in-process stage, which allows students to make adjustments or corrections. Those using this form to structure their critiques may be other students (peers), or it could be the teacher, parents, employers, or others whose feedback would be appropriate to the task. Typically, one to three individuals are asked to critique any one performance. However, the more critical the performance, the more critiques students may solicit. Having a variety of critiques increases the validity and reliability of the feedback gathered.

- **Record of Community Service Conferences**

  When students work together on a community service project, this form can be used to rate individual progress at interim points along the way. You would use the top section to identify and describe the project, preferably using a description prepared by the students alone or under your guidance. Students' names are then listed in the left-hand column, and individual conferences held. During the conference, the student's performance on each element listed (planning the project, etc.) should be rated using the scale provided, and additional comments can be added to the right to clarify what is specifically meant by the rating.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

It is important that such conferences be structured in advance. You should draft a list of targeted questions you could use to focus the discussion and ensure that you get the information you need to determine the ratings. Although this form is designed to be used by the teacher, it is important that the ratings and comments be shared with each student, so that he or she can make any needed changes or improvements.

If the results of these in-process ratings need to be translated into a grade, you can easily do so. You could, for example, decide that five + ratings equal an *A*, three + ratings and two √ ratings equal a *B*, etc. This grade could then be used as the process grade for the project, and a separate grade could be derived for the completed project.

Peer Assessment Conference on Performance

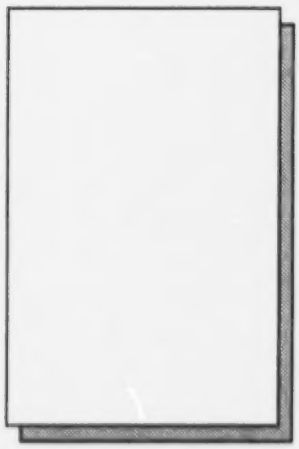
Directions: Please listen, watch, and critique my performance by completing the following statements:

Title of Performance: _____

The part I like best is—

_____
_____
_____
_____

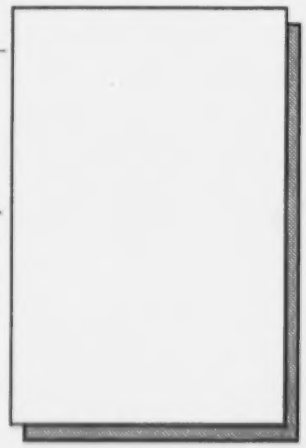
because →



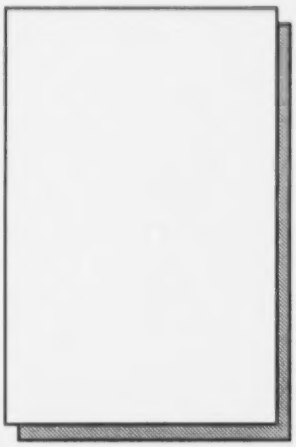
The part I am not really clear about is—

_____
_____
_____
_____

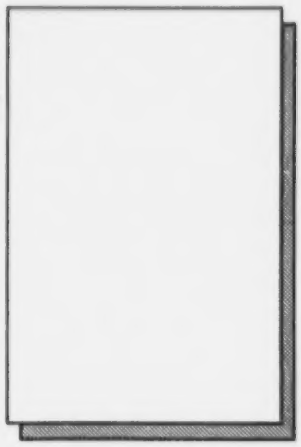
because →



Please tell me more about →



You might want to try →



Performed by: _____

Critiqued by: _____

Record of Community Service Conferences

Briefly identify and describe the community service project:

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____ Class: _____ Teacher: _____

Ratings:
+ Strong Evidence
√ Some Evidence
o Not Yet

Names of Students	Planning of the project	Use of leadership skills	Use of problem-solving skills	Challenge to abilities	Impact on the community	Comments
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						
16.						
17.						
18.						

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Decision-Making Matrices

A decision-making matrix is a device that allows an individual to structure the analysis of a problem and to delineate and weight the factors involved. The easiest way for you to understand how this tool works is to read the directions for and review the example provided on the following page.

If you want to assess a student's performance in using this tool, you could prepare a checklist with the criteria you wish to assess. For example:

- The alternatives listed reflect the full range of options available to the student
- The alternatives listed are realistic given the student's abilities, interests, and situation
- The criteria listed are substantive
- The calculations were accurately made
- Etc.

Decision-Making Matrix: Directions

- Identify a decision you wish to make.
- Write the decision question in a number of different ways until it accurately reflects the situation. Then write it on the blank line of the Decision-Making Matrix.
- Identify the different alternatives you are considering. Write these alternatives in the spaces going horizontally across the top of the matrix.
- Identify the criteria you consider important to a good decision or the things you want to accomplish as a result of your decision. Write these criteria in the vertical spaces on the left side of the matrix.
- Assign each criterion an importance score (very important = 3; moderately important = 2; least important = 1). The technical term for *importance score* is *weighting* —how much weight does each criterion carry in making the decision? Write the number representing the weighting in the same space as the corresponding criterion.
- Determine the extent to which each alternative possesses each criterion (0 through 3).
- Multiply the criterion scores by the *alternative scores*. Place these scores in the spaces where the vertical and horizontal lines/spaces intersect.
- Determine which choices have the highest total points. The alternative with the highest number would be the best alternative for your decision (based on your criteria).
- Consider your reaction to the "selected" alternative. If you are uncomfortable with that alternative, you may wish to reevaluate. Did you pick the right criteria? Are they weighted appropriately? If not, you need to revise accordingly.

A partially completed example is given at right, and a blank form you can use follows on the next page.

Decision-Making Matrix

Decision being made: Which job should I take?

Alternatives → / Criteria ↓	Fast Food Rest.	Mowing lawns	Babysitting	Pet Store	None of these jobs
Like my work 3	3x2=6	3x4=12	3x1=3	3x3=9	3x
Dependability or income 4	4x3=12	4x0=0	4x0=0	4x3=12	4x
Moderate pay 4	4x2=8	4x2=8	4x0=0	4x3=12	4x
Time for schoolwork and activities 5	5x2=10	5x2=10	5x3=15	5x	5x
Not too far to drive 1	1x2=2	1x0=0	1x3=3	1x	1x
	38	30	21		

64

Decision-Making Matrix

Decision being made: _____

Alternatives →					
Criteria ↓ / Weighting ↓					

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers (see samples, pp. 70-71) are mental maps that help students to make their thinking visible—to develop a "mental picture" of a concept or issue. They represent the process skills of sequencing, comparing, contrasting, classifying, inferring, drawing conclusions, problem-solving, and thinking critically.

Graphic organizers are effective tools in helping both the teacher and the student to—

- represent abstract or implied information in a more concrete form;
- store and retrieve information, helping the students remember better by making it more visual and understandable;
- show relationships (bridging) between the facts and the concepts;
- produce and organize ideas for use in other projects;
- relate new information to prior knowledge, relating (bridging) what they are doing today with the information and how they can apply and transfer it to other things; and
- assess student's use of processing skills.

You could, for example, introduce thinking skills by drawing a web on the board and asking students to brainstorm the characteristics of an effective employee. Using a Venn diagram, students could compare and contrast the characteristics of effective employees with the characteristics of effective family members. And using a mind map, students could brainstorm all types of job benefits and classify them into clusters. Each type of graphic organizer helps students reinforce one or more specific process skills.

Three steps should be followed when introducing a new graphic organizer to the class:

1. Introduce the new graphic organizer, select a simple topic, and model how to use it for the whole class.
2. Allow teams of students to select their own topic and practice using the new graphic organizer.
3. Ask students to use the graphic organizer during the day in class or with their homework. Encourage the students or teams to create an original graphic organizer and share it with the class by teaching some subject-related information.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

How and When to Use Graphic Organizers

Teachers and students can use graphic organizers in the following ways:

- Teachers can use them when introducing a new topic.
- Students can use them when they study, take notes, prepare for tests, plan projects, conduct research.
- Students can use them in presenting information to team members.
- They can be used in assessment and evaluation; include them on tests.
- Teams can draw graphic organizers on newsprint and use them to present information to the class

Brief Directions for Using Graphic Organizers

Mind Map: Select a topic and write it the center oval. Ask students to identify the main concepts and write them in the mid-sized ovals. Add supporting concepts or elements in the smallest ovals.

Chain: Select a topic, scenario, or action. Ask students to list the chain of events that would/might take place.

Web: On a blank sheet of paper, have students write a selected topic in the center of a rectangle. Ask students to add core concepts (main or big ideas) in medium-sized ovals. Draw lines out to supporting concepts or elements. Make connections between the supporting elements.

Spider Map: Identify a main issue or question, and write it in the center circle. Ask students to identify choices or answers, and write them in smaller circles connected to the center circle by lines.

Venn Diagram: Ask students to compare and contrast two topics, things, or issues. The differences should be written in the outer parts of the circles. Similarities or likenesses should be written in the intersecting areas of the circles.

Thinking At Right Angles: Select a topic and ask students to list the *facts* about it in column A and their *feelings and associations* in column B.

Sequential Thinking Models: Select an action to be completed, decision to be made, etc. Ask students to write out the steps or sequence of actions required.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Evaluation Options

If you plan to use graphic organizers as part of a test, you first need to identify concepts to be tested that lend themselves to the use of these tools. Then you need to select the specific type of graphic organizer that best fits the concept. To measure students' performance in completing a graphic organizer, you could use a criterion-referenced checklist. For example:

In graphically mapping the concept, the student—

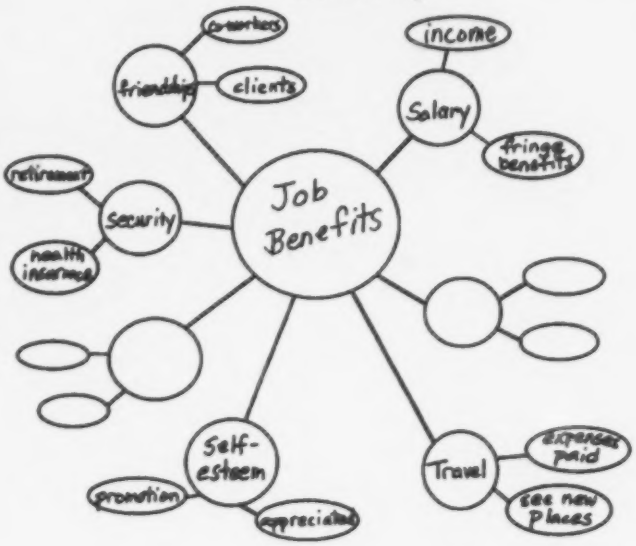
1. identified all key components of the concept
2. portrayed the relationships between components logically
3. etc.

Criteria for other important program elements you wish to assess in the test, such as neatness and spelling, could also be developed and added to the checklist.

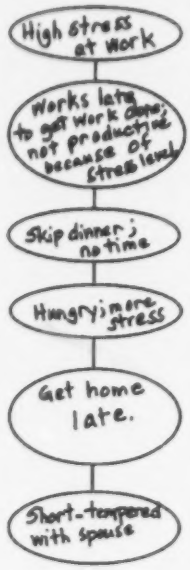
Samples of and blank forms for these graphic organizers are shown on the following pages. The blank graphic organizers could be enlarged and copied for use with students.

Graphic Organizers: Samples

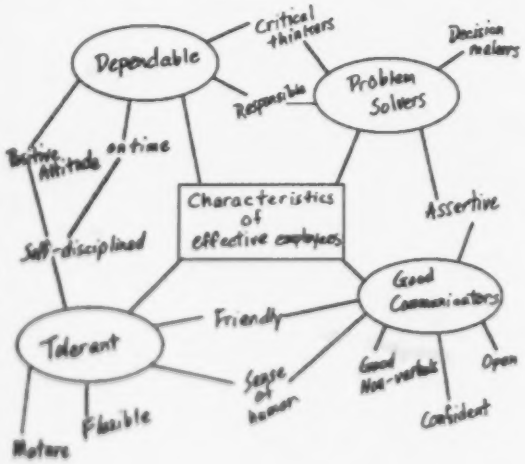
Mind Map



Chain


High stress at work
Works late to get work done; not productive because of stress level
Skip dinner; no time
Hungry; more stress
Get home late.
Short-tempered with spouse

Web



Spider Map

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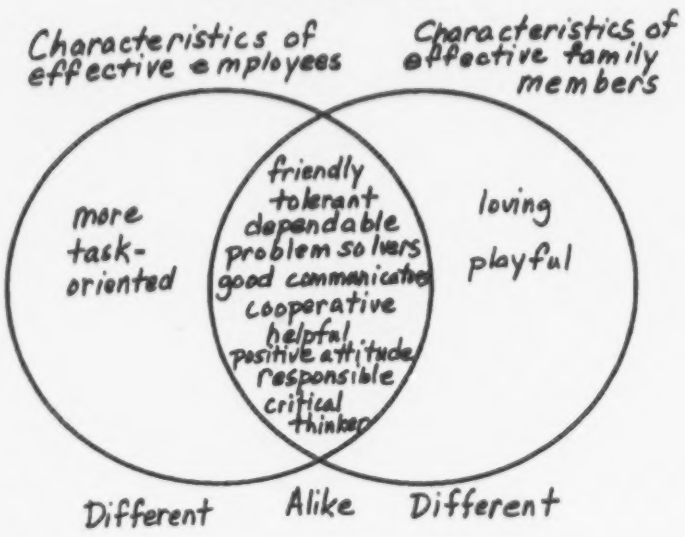
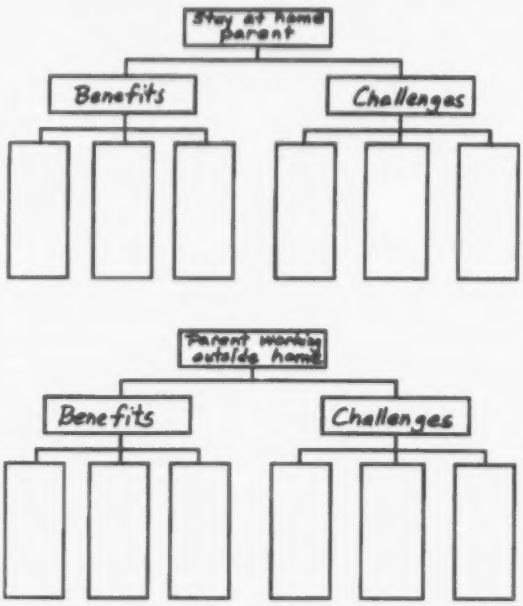
Venn Diagram



Sequential Thinking Model



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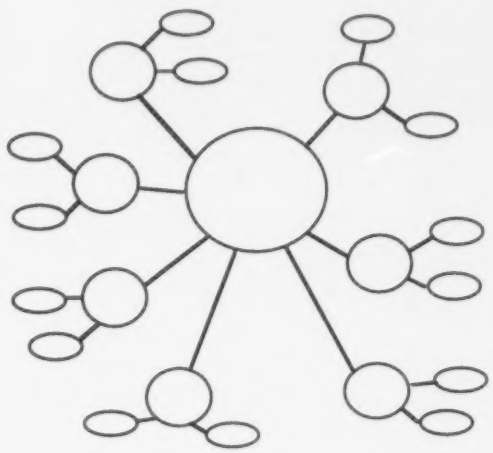
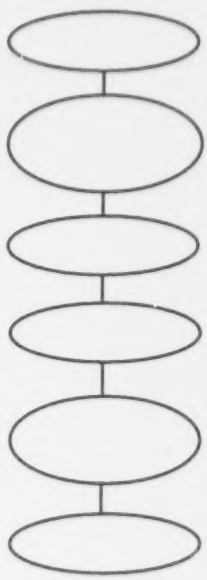
Graphic Organizers: Templates

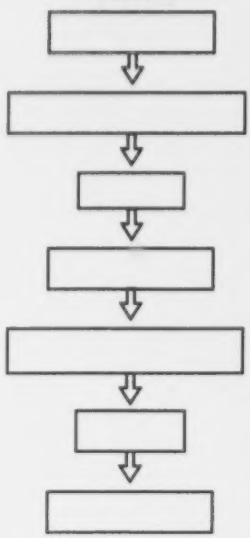
Mind Map



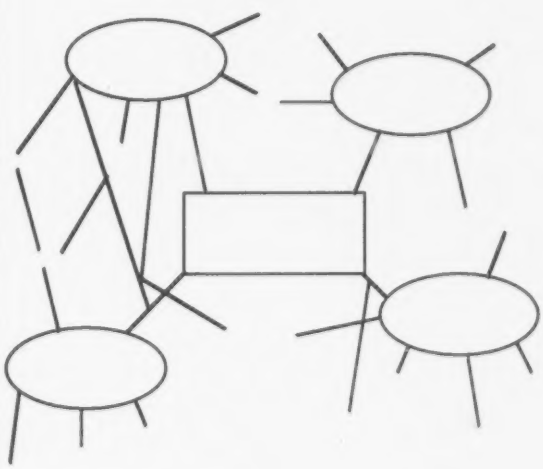
Chain



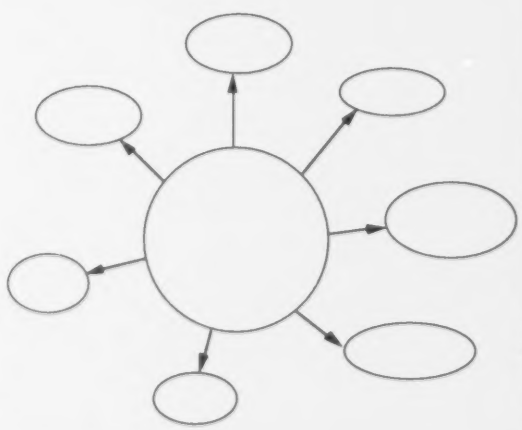
Chain



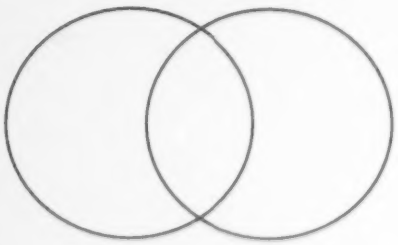
Web



Spider Map

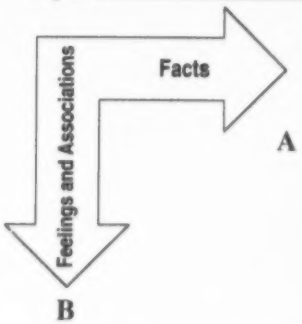


Venn Diagram



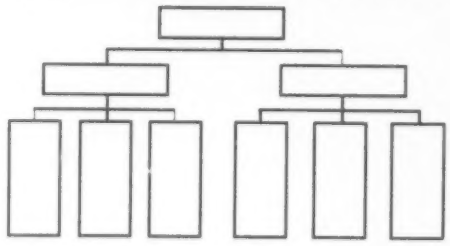
Thinking at Right Angles

Topic: _____

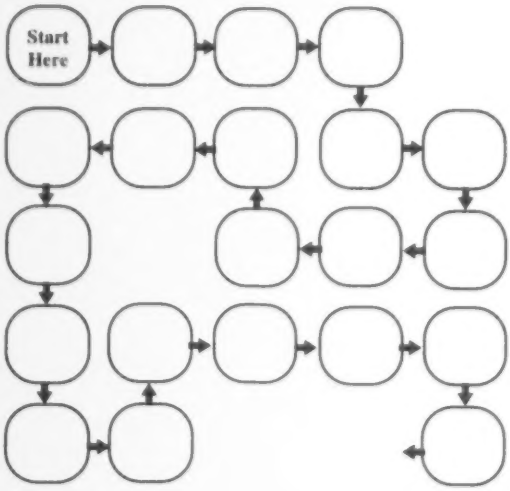


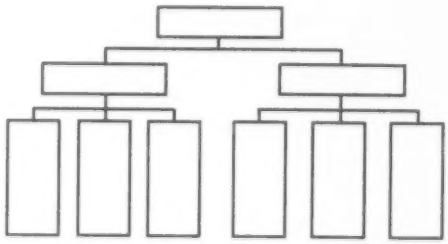
Sequential Thinking Model

Sequential Thinking Model



Sequential Thinking Model





Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Class or Group Discussion

Preparation for and participation in class discussion helps students interact meaningfully with course content and other students. It allows them to develop personal meaning from the concepts presented and to connect them to their own experiences. Preparation involves examining a sufficient number of readings in sufficient depth to be able to orally report and critique one's feelings in class. It also allows for participation in an informed and thoughtful way. One device that can be used to evaluate a student's performance during discussion is the rubric. A sample rubric is shown on the following page.

Class or Group Discussion Rubric

Directions: Circle the indicator point value that best describes the student's performance.

Criteria: Preparation for Discussion

4 Shows evidence of prior in-depth reading and of having given thought to the topic.
3 Shows some evidence of prior reading and of having given thought to the topic.
2 Shows little evidence of any prior reading or of having given thought to the topic.
1 Shows no evidence of prior reading or of having given thought to the topic.

Criteria: Topic Focused

4 Uses comments that always focus on the topic; challenges others' thinking when appropriate.
3 Uses comments that usually relate to the topic; listens without challenging or questioning others' thinking.
2 Uses comments that seldom relate to the topic; controls rather than supports discussion.
1 Use comments that consistently do not relate to the topic; sticks rigidly to own points and disregards group needs to move discussion on.

Criteria: Speaking and Listening Behaviors

4 Speaks clearly, with a volume that can be heard by all members of the group; maintains eye contact with group members; asks clarifying questions and paraphrases; allows sufficient wait time for others to think and respond.
3 Speaks clearly, with a volume that can be heard by all members of the group; maintains eye contact with some members of the group; asks some questions to clarify; allows some wait time for others to think and respond.
2 Speaks with a volume that is occasionally too loud or too soft; uses little eye contact; rarely asks questions to clarify; wants to quickly resolve issues and move on, and thus allows little wait-time for others to think or respond.
1 Speaks with a volume that is consistently too loud or too soft; employs poor facial expressions and no eye contact; asks questions abruptly or sarcastically; is impatient and does not wait for responses or provide thinking time.

Criteria: Contributing to Discussion

4 Contributes to discussion; shares ideas; asks open-ended questions; uses praise statements; encourages others.
3 Contributes to discussion; shares a few ideas; asks some questions which are mostly "yes-no" questions; sometimes encourages others.
2 Seldom contributes to discussion; disregards others' attempts to encourage his or her participation; has nothing to share.
1 Rarely contributes to discussion; ignores or disregards others.

Criteria: Consideration for Others

4 Regulates own participation to assure that all have the opportunity to participate; encourages comments verbally and using body language; takes turns; does not interrupt; "builds" on others' ideas.
3 Regulates own participation and doesn't say too much or too little; encourages others by asking for their opinions, waits for turn; seldom interrupts; listens to others' ideas before stating own ideas.
2 Tries to control others' participation or totally disregards others' needs; seldom takes turns; interrupts; puts down others' ideas.
1 Inconsiderate of others; emotionally withdraws from the group through negative body language or verbal sarcasm; interrupts when wanting to make a comment or put others down.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Journals and Learning Logs

Journals and learning logs can be used to assess the reflectiveness of students' responses regarding process skills and the students' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own work.

Students can use journals and learning logs to—

- reflect on information or key ideas presented in a lecture, video, field trip, group presentation, or reading assignment;
- make predictions about what will happen next in a case study, role play, or real-life situation;
- record their own questions or respond to questions posed by the teacher, other students, or team members;
- summarize the main ideas of a discussion, video, lecture, or reading;
- make connections between the ideas presented in class with ideas in other classes or in their own lives;
- monitor change in their ability to apply process skills;
- brainstorm problem solutions or ideas for potential projects or presentations;
- record problem-solving techniques; and
- reflect on their own personal growth in the development of process skills.

Learning logs usually consist of short, more-objective entries that contain observations of things, questions about or responses to lectures or a classroom activity, problem-solving entries, or daily reactions to what is covered in class.

Journals are usually written in narrative form, are more subjective, and deal with personal thoughts and experiences, feelings, and opinions. Journal entries are generally longer, more descriptive, and more free-flowing than learning log entries. They are often used to respond to deeper issues or concerns, describe a reaction to an event, or reflect on personal experiences and feelings.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Ways to Use of Journals and Learning Logs in Instruction

One way to use a learning log is in a reflective lesson such as the following:

1. The lesson starts with direct instruction provided by the teacher; the lecture/presentation should not be longer that 10 to 15 minutes and should be made to the whole class.
2. Students spend time writing in their learning log for about 5 minutes, including the following information: name, topic, date, key ideas from the presentation (or discussion or lecture), connections they can make with other ideas, and questions they still have.
3. Each student shares his or her learning log with a partner or team member, discusses the key ideas with the other student, and tries to answer the other's questions. This should take about 5 minutes.
4. The teacher conducts a brief discussion with the whole class to see if anyone still has any questions that were not answered by a partner or a team member. The class then discusses the connections students made. This should take about 5 minutes.
5. The teacher continues with the next segment of direct instruction. The cycle repeats itself if there is time, or students complete a learning log entry for homework. On the following day, the students start the class by discussing their entries.

Another way to use a learning log or journal is to have the students respond to a question posed by the teacher or to complete a "lead-in" statement (or stem) provided by the teacher. These questions or statements could be used as an anticipatory set, as a check for understanding, to track new thinking or possibilities for transfer, and for closure.

Listed on the left on the following page are examples of such lead-ins: questions for students to answer or statements for them to complete. Some of the sample lead-ins focus on the process skills of problem solving and decision making. The others focus on higher levels of cognition, from application, through analysis and synthesis, to evaluation. The process skill or cognitive level for each lead-in is to the right.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Lead-ins	Focus
A question I have is . . .	(problem solving)
I'm stuck on . . .	(problem solving)
I'm concerned about . . .	(problem solving)
One solution I think could work is . . .	(problem solving)
I understand, but . . .	(problem solving)
My problem is . . .	(problem solving)
I prefer . . . because . . .	(decision making)
If I had to choose . . .	(decision making)
Making a decision is . . .	(decision making)
One criticism is . . .	(decision making)
I can't decide if . . .	(decision making)
Other ways I can use this idea . . .	(decision making)
I think the most important point is . . .	(decision making)
The next time I would . . .	(decision making)
I want to . . .	(application)
A connecting idea is . . .	(application)
A book this reminds me of . . .	(application)
This makes me think of a time when . . .	(application)
I think this applies . . .	(application)
Compare to . . .	(analysis)
I wonder . . .	(analysis)
The best part . . .	(analysis)
Take a small part like . . .	(analysis)
By contrast . . .	(analysis)
A logical sequence seems to be . . .	(analysis)
On the negative/positive side . . .	(analysis)
Suppose . . .	(synthesis)
Possibly . . .	(synthesis)
Imagine . . .	(synthesis)
What if . . .	(synthesis)
I predict . . .	(synthesis)
How about . . .	(synthesis)
I believe . . .	(evaluation)
I question . . .	(evaluation)
How . . .	(evaluation)
Why . . .	(evaluation)
It seems irrelevant that . . .	(evaluation)
One point of view is . . .	(evaluation)
This would be helpful if only . . .	(evaluation)

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Assessment of Journals and Learning Logs

Learning logs and journals are usually considered formative (in-process) methods of assessment. They can be assigned grades or point values by using a rubric devised from specific criteria or indicators relating to the following:

- Reflectiveness
- Depth of response
- Number of entries
- Originality
- Use of concrete images
- Length of response
- Descriptive words
- Evidence of thoughtfulness
- Creativity
- Connections to other subjects
- Responses to posed question or lead-in
- Connections to a life experience

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Observations

Observation is one of the most effective strategies to find out what students can do and what their learning needs are. And the observation checklist is one assessment tool used to monitor what was observed: the specific skills, behaviors, or dispositions of individual students or all the students in the class. It is also a record-keeping device for teachers to use to keep track of who has mastered targeted skills and who still needs assistance. An effective checklist should include the student's name, space to write in four or five targeted areas, a code or rating scale to determine to what degree the student has or has not demonstrated the skill, and a space for comments or anecdotal notes. It is important to date the observations as it is helpful to note developmental growth over time.

Observation checklists are used as formative assessments by focusing on specific behaviors, process skills, communication skills, or any other skill. Team members can use checklists to assess the progress of the entire team. When used by a team, team members can share and discuss the assessments among themselves to determine team strengths and areas requiring improvement. Observation checklists may also be used for self-reflection and self-assessment; for example, individual students could use them to assess their own progress and to develop an improvement plan.

Each teacher can determine which specific skills to include in the observation checklist. It is important that the students know up front what areas will be observed. They should be trained in what the skill looks like and sounds like, particularly if they are going to be assessing peers or doing a self-assessment. Likewise, it is important that the skills and processes being observed are modeled and taught to the students before the observations. A baseline observation could be completed before the teaching of the skills if the teacher thinks the comparison would be helpful.

To avoid subjective judgment, documentation involves recording what the teacher sees, not the teacher's interpretation of what the student is doing. Therefore, the observation checklist must list observable skills and processes. The accuracy of your observations will be enhanced if the observations are recorded on a daily basis for a specified time. Too often, teachers try to record behaviors when doing a summative (or final) assessment, resulting in inaccurate evaluations.

Checklists show teachers and students the areas that need work early enough for students to get help before bad habits or misinformation become entrenched or lack of competence becomes a handicap in handling subsequent content. The checklists also indicate the effectiveness of the teaching strategies used. If a large number of students are not doing well according to the checklist results, the teacher has the opportunity to try other strategies. See pp. 47-54 for suggestions for possible process skill indicators to build into checklists.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

The checklist that follows provides a rating scale (from "Not Yet" to "Usually") that can be used in assessing students' *habits of mind*. According to Marzano et al. (1993, pp. 1-3), there are five dimensions of learning, one of which is Productive Habits of Mind: "mental habits that enable individuals to learn on their own whatever they want or need to know at any point in their lives" (p. 3). The sample checklist looks at nine such habits. You could use the checklist as is or develop a similar form for developing other important mental habits or observable behaviors.

Habits of Mind Observation Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

1. Student stays on task; completes assignment without constant supervision.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

2. Student listens thoughtfully to directions before starting assignments; avoids impulsive behaviors.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

3. Student listens to responses of others; paraphrases accurately.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

4. Student demonstrates persistence in difficult situations; is not easily distracted or defeated; does not ask unnecessary questions.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

5. Student is an independent thinker, makes independent decisions; does not indiscriminately "follow the crowd."
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

6. Student checks work for accuracy; is thorough and attentive to detail.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

7. Student is unafraid to take risks; will try new things even though they may seem difficult.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

8. Student demonstrates mental flexibility; tries different approaches and strategies for problem solving.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

9. Student works cooperatively; can solve problems collaboratively as well as independently.
   Not Yet Rarely Sometimes Usually

Assessment is based on *Dimensions of Learning* by Robert Marzano, et al.

Source: Vicki Lowe and Lou Howell, *How Do We Know They Know? Alternative Assessments in Home Economics* (Gainesville, VA: Home Economics Education Association, 1994), p. 33.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Portfolios

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas. Portfolios allow students to assume ownership in ways that few other instructional strategies allow because they require students to collect and reflect on examples of their work. When purposefully assembled, portfolios become a blend of instruction and assessment. Together, instruction and assessment give more than either gives separately.

Purposes of a Portfolio

Portfolios can serve any or all of the following purposes:

- To document growth over time so students can become informed and thoughtful assessors of their own learning
- To model personal responsibility in questioning and reflecting on one's own work
- To provide opportunities for students to make connections between prior knowledge and skills and new learning
- To provide a way of evaluating student learning while informing teachers, students, and parents
- To facilitate students' understanding of a learned process; to have students recognize that knowing how to pursue a task is as much a part of learning as is producing a high-quality final product
- To validate that the measured outcomes are the direct products of classroom instruction
- To involve students in the managing and monitoring of learning so that the scope of learning is enlarged
- To provide opportunities for students to make critical choices about what they select for their portfolios; to create collections of personally important work
- To trace the evolution of one or more major projects/product development; to celebrate growth
- To provide documented achievement for awarding alternative credit for course work
- To articulate achievement levels at each level of course work that is taken
- To place students in the most appropriate course; to design appropriate course work for the student; to improve instruction
- To communicate the student's competence and achievement to the student's subsequent teacher
- To provide opportunities to demonstrate different learning styles, multiple intelligences, and cultural diversity
- To nurture students and foster a positive self-concept
- To encourage and reflect risk-taking and experimentation

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Guidelines for Implementation

Six questions should be answered in attempting to implement the use of portfolios. Those questions—and the steps to completed or factors to be considered in answering them—are as follows:

1. **What are the purposes of using a portfolio and how will it be used?**
   - ✓ Identify and clarify the main purposes for the portfolio.
   - ✓ Determine ownership of the portfolio: student alone, teacher alone, student and teacher together; the school, students, and parents; next school student attends; other.
   - ✓ Determine who will have access to the portfolio: student and teacher who created it, any teacher who needs/wants information provided by it, counselors, anyone in the school, anyone in the district who shares an interest in the student's education, parents, other.
   - ✓ Determine what work will be kept from year to year.
   - ✓ Determine whether the portfolio will include one subject or all subject areas.

2. **How should pieces be selected to fulfill the purpose in the portfolio?**
   - ✓ Determine whether work still in process or only finished work should be included.
   - ✓ Determine how students and teachers will mutually determine inclusion criteria: selecting only "best" work or a combination of work to show growth.
   - ✓ Determine how students will upgrade the portfolio as they gain new or more-advanced skills.
   - ✓ Determine how much of the work will be teacher-selected and how much will be student-selected.
   - ✓ Determine whether teacher's or other students' comments will be included.

3. **What specific pieces will be included in the portfolio?**
   - ✓ Consider such options as the following:
     - Completed rubrics for performance assessments
     - Completed rubrics for process skills assessments
     - Completed rubrics for product/project assessments
     - Teacher-made quizzes and tests
     - Homework samples
     - Group work (pictures, rubrics, artifacts)
     - Learning logs
     - Problem-solving think sheets or logs
     - Reflective journals
     - Written work

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

- Graphs indicating change or growth
- Rough drafts of written work to show process and progress
- Videos of performances, group work, class participation
- Audiocassettes of presentations, readings, singing, questioning techniques
- Graphic organizers
- Questions for a conference or interview
- Completed questionnaires about attitudes and opinions
- Interviews with other students
- Samples of drawings and other art work
- Reports of lab experiments
- Computer programs, printouts, disks
- Completed observation checklists
- Self-assessments
- Notes concerning why each piece of information was included
- Documentation concerning FHA/HERO projects and action projects
- Pictures of individual or group projects that are too big to include
- Letter to parents or teacher about the contents of the portfolio
- Statement of future goals
- Pictures of performances
- Solutions to open-ended questions
- A content-related autobiography
- Notes from an interview between teacher and student
- Papers that show the student's correction of errors or misconceptions
- Excerpts from a student's daily journal
- A problem made up by the student and the solution showing the critical thinking and problem-solving process
- Work from another area that relates to subject area of the portfolio

4. **How should the portfolios be organized?**
   - ✓ Portfolios can be made using three-ring binders, folders with pockets, metal rings holding papers together with tag board covers, etc.
   - ✓ Audio and videocassettes can be placed in plastic pencil cases and put in the binders or metal rings.
   - ✓ Students can create portfolio covers that reflect their personality and interests.
   - ✓ A table of contents should be included, and the portfolio should be organized in that order.
   - ✓ Each item in the portfolio should be dated.

- ✓ Older students may be the "keepers" of their portfolios and bring them in for a portfolio check on specified dates.
- ✓ Use of a computer, especially multimedia, can be a useful organization and storage tool.

5. **What are the evaluation options?**
   - ✓ Make student self-assessment an integral part of the portfolio. The following questions may be used as a prompt for students when self-assessing and writing reflections:
     - What is the process you went through while creating this piece?
     - Who or what influenced you to create this piece?
     - What risks did you take? What new things did you try?
     - What new knowledge did you gain?
     - What new process skills did you gain?
     - Why did you choose this piece for your portfolio?
     - Do you have questions or concerns about this piece?
     - If you were going to redo this piece, what would you do differently next time?
     - What changes in your work and in your learning have you noticed over time?
   - ✓ Invite local business representatives to review portfolios and provide each student with feedback. Portfolios should be presented by the students themselves.
   - ✓ Use conferences to evaluate portfolios. Conferences may take any of the following forms:
     - Teacher and student
     - Student and student
     - Student and parent
     - Student and person from occupation related to the subject matter
     - Student and classroom team/cooperative work group
     - Student, parent, and teacher
     - Cross-age or cross-grade
   - ✓ Determine grading options; for example:
     - Final portfolio is ungraded if all work placed in the portfolio has previously been graded. The final portfolio is to show growth and development over time.
     - One grade is given to the entire portfolio based on predetermined criteria developed by both the students and the teacher.
     - Each piece in the final portfolio is graded separately based on predetermined criteria.
   - ✓ Include a letter from the teacher and/or parents to the student including comments, feedback, and encouragement.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Seven handouts related to the use of portfolios are provided on the following pages.

- **Inside the Portfolio for Balancing School, Family, and Work**

  This graphic organizer portrays the focus and required contents for a portfolio focusing on balancing school, family, and work. You will note that the center "file folder" spells out the portfolio's focus. Each surrounding box then explains in detail one piece of evidence that needs to be included and, if necessary, the process for producing that evidence. Working alone or with other Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in your school or district, you can use this graphic organizer to lay out the portfolio requirements for a course or program. Ideally, students would have input into the process as well. Once prepared, the graphic organizer can be shared with students so they can easily picture what they are expected to create, produce, or perform.

  Another option, particularly with advanced students, would be to start a course or unit by letting students draft portfolio requirements. They could be provided with copies of a blank form and a sample form to assist them in this task. Their drafted suggestions could then serve as at least a partial basis for your development of the final requirements.

  Individual students could also use these forms to develop portfolio requirements for their own projects.

- **Inside the Portfolio (Blank)**

- **Portfolio Checklist**

  Using this checklist, you can plan the interim points at which student progress on portfolios should be checked. On the right is space for listing the items to be placed in the portfolio. If you have predetermined these items, the list could be typed in before distribution. If students have created their own portfolio requirements for a project or if they may select items for inclusion from a teacher-approved list, they could be asked to fill in this section for you.

  On this form, a single column has been provided for specifying dates. If you wish to plan multiple dates for checking interim progress, you could add additional columns to the checklist.

  Since this is just a progress check, no rating scale or criteria are provided. You simply place a check in the column provided to indicate that you met with the student to determine progress to date on each listed item. Comments related to progress (e.g., "needs to get started on creating a brochure") can be noted in the space provided at the bottom.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

- **Portfolio Review**

  The review form provided here is for the teacher's use. The elements to be reviewed are listed, and space is provided for written comments. Such a form could also be used to seek reviews from a larger audience; however, the elements would need to be modified so that the information they are asked to provide is realistic. For example, an individual in the community reviewing a portfolio for the first time could not be expected to note "Changes/growth."

- **Monthly Portfolio Letter**

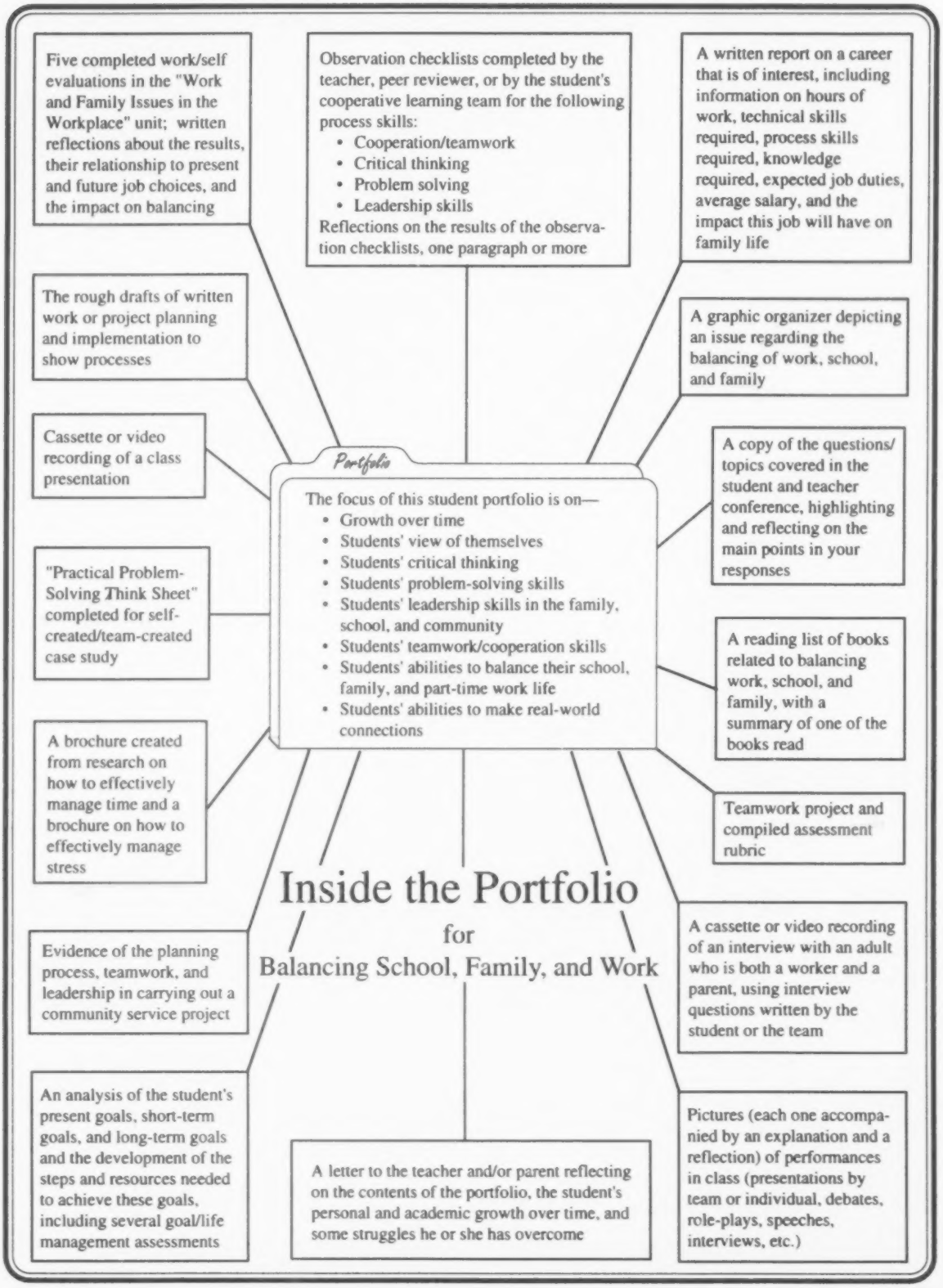
  Another tool for encouraging student progress is the monthly portfolio letter. Each month, students must complete the first three lead-in statements, which require them to note progress and reflect on their accomplishments thus far. Once the student has signed and dated the form, the developing portfolio and the form are provided—first to the parents and then to the teacher—to keep them informed and secure their feedback.

- **Job Readiness Skills Portfolio**

  Detailed directions are provided in this handout for the development of a portfolio designed to present evidence concerning job readiness. As written, it is directed to the teacher; however, it could be easily adapted to be shared with students.

- **Job Readiness Skills Portfolio: Product Assessment**

  A rubric or a criterion-referenced checklist is an ideal device for evaluating a finished portfolio or its specific individual contents. Once decisions have been made about the portfolio focus, requirements, and standards—as has been done in the previous handout—such an assessment tool can be easily developed. The rubric shown here provides for rating each weighted element on a three-point scale. By multiplying each rating by each weight and then summing the results, you arrive at the total points earned.


Five completed work/self evaluations in the "Work and Family Issues in the Workplace" unit; written reflections about the results, their relationship to present and future job choices, and the impact on balancing
Observation checklists completed by the teacher, peer reviewer, or by the student's cooperative learning team for the following process skills:
• Cooperation/teamwork
• Critical thinking
• Problem solving
• Leadership skills
Reflections on the results of the observation checklists, one paragraph or more
A written report on a career that is of interest, including information on hours of work, technical skills required, process skills required, knowledge required, expected job duties, average salary, and the impact this job will have on family life
The rough drafts of written work or project planning and implementation to show processes
A graphic organizer depicting an issue regarding the balancing of work, school, and family
Cassette or video recording of a class presentation
Portfolio
The focus of this student portfolio is on—
• Growth over time
• Students' view of themselves
• Students' critical thinking
• Students' problem-solving skills
• Students' leadership skills in the family, school, and community
• Students' teamwork/cooperation skills
• Students' abilities to balance their school, family, and part-time work life
• Students' abilities to make real-world connections
A copy of the questions/topics covered in the student and teacher conference, highlighting and reflecting on the main points in your responses
"Practical Problem-Solving Think Sheet" completed for self-created/team-created case study
A reading list of books related to balancing work, school, and family, with a summary of one of the books read
A brochure created from research on how to effectively manage time and a brochure on how to effectively manage stress
Teamwork project and compiled assessment rubric
Inside the Portfolio
for
Balancing School, Family, and Work
Evidence of the planning process, teamwork, and leadership in carrying out a community service project
A cassette or video recording of an interview with an adult who is both a worker and a parent, using interview questions written by the student or the team
An analysis of the student's present goals, short-term goals, and long-term goals and the development of the steps and resources needed to achieve these goals, including several goal/life management assessments
A letter to the teacher and/or parent reflecting on the contents of the portfolio, the student's personal and academic growth over time, and some struggles he or she has overcome
Pictures (each one accompanied by an explanation and a reflection) of performances in class (presentations by team or individual, debates, role-plays, speeches, interviews, etc.)

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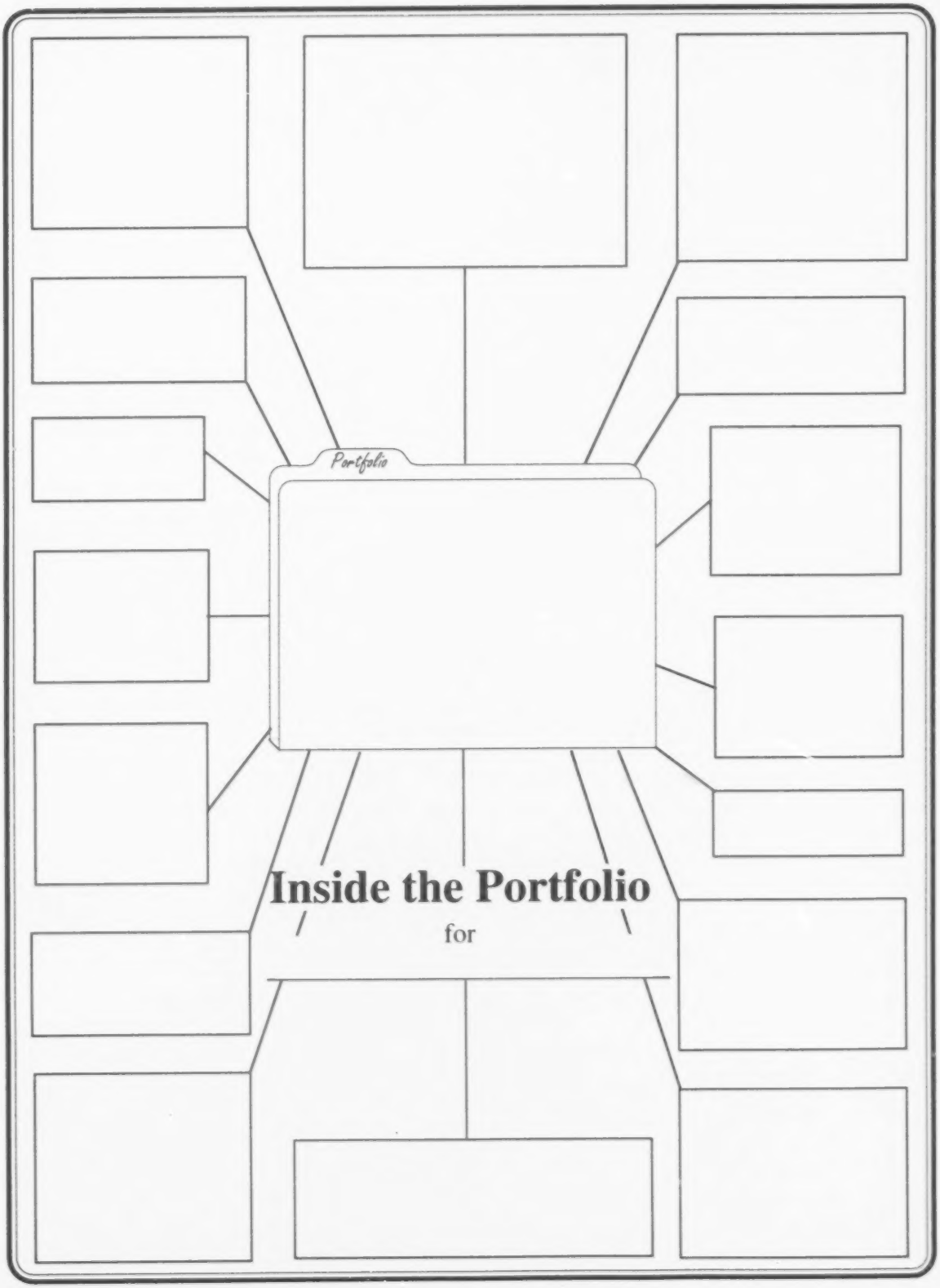
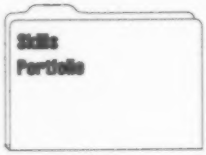

Portfolio
Inside the Portfolio
for

Portfolio Checklist



Name: _____ Teacher: _____ Year: _____

Dates to check portfolio items	✓	Items to place in portfolio

Comments

Portfolio Review

Portfolio review for: _____ Date: _____

Completed by: _____
Teacher

Strengths:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Changes, growth:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Questions, concerns, comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Next steps needed:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Monthly Portfolio Letter

Dear Parents or Teacher,

While you look at my portfolio, please notice these things:

These are some things I am most pleased and excited about and feel I do well:

These are some things I am working on:

Please make some comments about my portfolio.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher signature _____ Date: _____

Job Readiness Skills Portfolio

The student will—

- Develop an employability/job readiness portfolio.

Student Outcomes:

- Discover, document, and develop employability skills.
- Reinforce integration of academic skills, employability skills, and course-specific skills.
- Reflect on own work.
- Showcase own best work.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- Students and teacher mutually determine inclusion criteria.
- Students upgrade portfolio as they gain new or more advanced skills.
- Selections are dated to document student growth.
- Self-assessment is made an integral part of the portfolio.
- Local business representatives are invited to review portfolios and provide each student with feedback.
- Scoring is optional (see rubric on the following page).

NOTE: This portfolio could be aligned with the FHA/HERO Star Event: Job Application Interview and/or to development of Ohio's Career Passport.

The Job Readiness Skills Portfolio should contain—

1. **Letter of Introduction**—The major self-reflective piece in the portfolio, this student-developed letter should describe the student's qualities and goals and introduce the various parts of the portfolio, including an analysis of the significance of the work included.
2. **Career Development Package**—A résumé, an employment application, and a letter of recommendation should be included to demonstrate key career-planning and job-seeking skills.
3. **Supervised Practical Experience Evaluation**—An evaluation of the student's career-performance skills by a skilled supervisor should be included. If the student has no paid work experience, a letter of recommendation from parents or relatives should be included as documentation of work habits at home.
4. **Written Report**—Include an outline, first draft, and final version of a three- to ten-page report on a topic from the student's field of interest or career choice.
5. **Work Samples**—Include samples, sketches, photographs or descriptions of classroom-based work that demonstrates mastery of prespecified skills. This could include pictures, videotapes, audiotapes, illustrations, assessments (e.g., checklists, self-assessments, parent assessments, journals).
6. **Statement of Competencies**—Include documentation of competencies attained in Work and Family Life or job training programs. Also include any certificates of completion.
7. **Awards and Recognition**—FHA/HERO evidence of membership and offices held, service projects, and involvement in other organizations should be included. Also include newspaper write-ups, tapes of radio or television coverage, etc.
8. **Other**—Include other evidence of job readiness as student or teacher deem appropriate.

Source: Adapted from Vicki Lowe and Lou Howell, *How Do We Know They Know? Alternative Assessments In Home Economics* (Gainesville, VA: Home Economics Education Association, 1994), p. 25.

Job Readiness Skills Portfolio

Product Assessment

Criteria: Rating x Weight	3	2	1
Letter of Introduction _____ x3 _____	Clearly communicates analysis of self as learner; recognizes and celebrates successes.	Some uncertainty in self as learner; recognizes but does not celebrate successes.	Message does not convey self as learner; does not recognize or celebrate successes.
Career Development _____ x4 _____	Demonstrates understanding and use of job-seeking skills.	Understands but does not consistently use job-seeking skills.	Basic job-seeking skills have not been mastered.
Supervised Practical Experience _____ x4 _____	Demonstrates understanding and use of job-keeping skills.	Understands but does not consistently use job-keeping skills.	Basic job-keeping skills have not been mastered.
Written Report _____ x4 _____	Writing shows depth and elaboration of topic; few errors in mechanics; strong thinking skills are evident.	Competent treatment of topics; occasional errors in mechanics; evidence of thinking is present.	Writing lacks depth and elaboration of topic; frequent errors in mechanics; evidence that thinking lacks clarity.
Work Samples _____ x5 _____	Samples show variety of skills; consistently completed with above-average accomplishment.	Samples show some variety of skills; inconsistent accomplishment.	Samples lack variety of skills; few samples presented, with only minimal accomplishment.
Statement of Competencies _____ x4 _____	Understands and uses necessary terminology and skills; concepts are integrated.	Understands and uses necessary terminology; skills and concepts evident, but not integrated.	Basic terminology, skills, and concepts have not been mastered; unable to integrate.
Awards and Recognition _____ x3 _____	Demonstrates a variety and depth of involvement and leadership skills.	Some involvement in organizations and in leadership skills.	Lacks variety and depth in involvement or leadership in organizations.
Other _____ x _____		**Comments:**	

Total Points: _____

Total Points Possible: 81 points

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Questioning

Questioning can be an effective process assessment tool during discussions, debriefings, conferences, or reviews of journals and learning logs. Actively encouraging and providing opportunities for all students to think about process skills as they learn them and use them is an essential element of teaching process skills. Students may have acquired bad habits and attitudes about thinking in the classroom, expecting the teacher to do all the work—all the thinking, decision making, goal setting, etc. Extra care and extra work will eventually bring about a change. Effective questioning techniques are a key part in encouraging students to process not only what they did, but ***how*** they did it (meta-cognition).

Students need to learn how to ask questions as well. Asking good questions at the right time is an important process skill. When students ask other students effective questions, they can become an important part of the assessment processes occurring in a classroom.

With the use of effective questions, there must also be the strategic use of *wait-time*. This strategy will yield immediate and dramatic increases in student involvement and interaction. Wait-time is simply silence. The general guidelines for wait-time are as follows:

1. Present the question to the class, wait, and then call on the first student.
2. Wait 3 to 10 seconds after each question before calling on anyone to respond.
3. Establish eye contact and cue the students.
4. Move physically closer to the student who doesn't usually answer.
5. Seek out multiple responses to the same question, even when simple recall is used.
6. Wait 3 to 10 seconds after the last response before introducing the next question; students may want to add more or ask a question.

The benefits/results of wait-time most often include the following:

- Length of students' responses increases.
- Clarification, extension, justification, and on-task conversation increases.
- Students begin to listen to each other.
- The number of freely offered and appropriate student responses increases.
- Failing to respond or saying "I don't know" decreases.
- Inflected responses decrease as students appear to be more confident in their answers.
- The number of speculative alternative explanations increases.
- Students work together more at comparing data and make more inferences.

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

- The frequency of questions raised by students increases.
- The frequency of responses by students who were rated relatively "slow" by their teachers increases.
- Teachers become more flexible in their responses (i.e., are more willing to listen to diverse answers and to examine their plausibility).
- Teachers' questioning patterns become more manageable (i.e., questions decrease in number but show greater variety and quality).

The handout that follows has two potential purposes. You can use it yourself to get ideas for developing questions or statements that will provoke student thinking. The handout can also be provided to students to help them (1) frame questions for others or (2) ask themselves questions that allow them to reflect on the processes they have used (metacognition).

The six levels shown reflect the cognitive levels established by Bloom et al. (1956), from lowest (knowledge) to highest (evaluation). In alternative assessment systems, a focus on the higher levels is desirable and somewhat natural.

What's the Question?

Asking good questions at the right time is an important process skill. This handout provides sample lead-ins for questioning at all levels of knowledge. Asking questions at the higher levels—the application level and above—will encourage more productive and reflective thinking and processing.

1. **Knowledge** (elicit factual answers, recall, recognition)
   - Who . . .
   - What . . .
   - Why . . .
   - When . . .
   - Where . . .
   - How . . .
   - How much . . .
   - Which one . . .
   - Recall . . .
   - Describe . . .
   - Define . . .
   - Memorize . . .
   - Select . . .
   - Name . . .
   - Point out . . .
   - Label . . .
   - Reproduce . . .
   - List . . .

2. **Comprehension** (translate, interpret, extrapolate)
   - Translate in your own words . . .
   - State in your own words . . .
   - Select the definition . . .
   - What does this mean . . .
   - State in one word . . .
   - This represents . . .
   - Read the graph/table . . .
   - What part doesn't fit . . .
   - Locate . . .
   - Give an example . . .
   - What are they saying . . .
   - Condense this paragraph . . .
   - What expectations are there . . .
   - Explain what is meant by . . .
   - Explain what is happening . . .
   - What restrictions would you . . .
   - Indicate . . .
   - Tell . . .
   - Match . . .
   - Outline . . .
   - Identify . . .
   - Summarize . . .
   - Translate . . .

3. **Application** (use in situations that are new, unfamiliar)
   - Relate the day-to-day use of this concept . . .
   - What is the use for . . .
   - Choose the statements that . . .
   - How would you diagram . . .
   - How would you chart . . .
   - How would you use . . .
   - Demonstrate how . . .
   - That applies to . . .
   - If . . . how . . .
   - Illustrate . . .
   - Show how . . .
   - Identify . . .
   - Construct . . .
   - Explain . . .
   - Apply . . .

4. **Analysis** (break down into parts, relate parts to the whole)
   - Compare the . . . (*comparing*)
   - From the discussion, what can you infer about the . . . (*inferring*)
   - How can you arrange the . . . (*sequencing*)
   - What characteristics made you think this was . . . (*distinguishing*)
   - How will you categorize these . . . (*investigating*)
   - How can you arrange . . . (*classifying*)
   - What do you think caused . . . (*determining cause and effect*)
   - Arrange in groups . . . (*grouping*)
   - What other things can you think of with qualities/processes similar to . . . (*making analogies*)
   - What can you do to test your . . . (*experimenting*)
   - How are these different from or similar to . . . (*contrasting*)
   - How can you arrange . . . (*organizing*)
   - How can you go about . . . (*planning*)
   - What data are we going to need to . . . (*analyzing*)

5. **Synthesis** (combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before)
   - What can you say about all . . . (*generalizing*)
   - What will happen if . . . (*relating/forecasting*)
   - Imagine if . . . (*hypothesizing*)
   - Is there a way you can think of . . . (*designing*)
   - How would you test . . . (*forecasting/inferring*)
   - Propose an alternative . . . (*formulating*)
   - How else would you . . . (*predicting/imagining*)
   - Given the supplies on this table, devise a . . . (*inventing*)

6. **Evaluation** (judge according to some set of criteria and state why)
   - Which of these two is the . . . (*judging/deciding*)
   - What other examples meet the stated criteria . . . (*verifying*)
   - How can you prove . . . (*verifying*)
   - How would you critique this . . . (*rating*)
   - What value do you see in . . . (*disputing/defending*)
   - Can you find the errors in . . . (*critiquing/assessing*)
   - What inconsistencies appear . . . (*appraising*)
   - Which is more valid/important/appropriate/logical . . . (*appraising/choosing*)

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Rubrics

It is crucial that learning goals are well articulated and performance standards are set before students' engagement in the tasks that will be assessed. Students find it difficult to perform at high levels when the criteria are unknown. One of the best tools for establishing and communicating clear standards on products and performances is the rubric. A rubric is a set of scoring guidelines—the standards for assigning scores to student work.

A scoring rubric consists of a ***fixed scale*** that describes the standards of performance, a list of ***elements*** (guidelines, rules, principles, products, performances, or responses) to be assessed, and ***indicators/evidence*** for each anchor (point) on the scale. In the sample on p. 110, for example, a 1-8 fixed scale is used, six elements are assessed ("effective use of time," etc.), and the indicators/evidence for each anchor are described below the fixed scale.

Advantages of Using Rubrics

The use of rubrics provides several advantages for students:

- Rubrics promote learning by offering clear, up-front performance targets for students, which allows them to see what mastery (and varying degrees of mastery) of the task looks like. Students will know the basis for judging what constitutes exemplary/proficient, adequate/satisfactory/acceptable, or novice/beginner/amateur work before they begin.
- Presented to students along with the performance/assessment task, rubrics provide students with "road signs"—information about where they are in relation to where they need to be.
- Rubrics increase consistency in the rating of performances, products, skills, and understandings.
- Students are able to assess their own work based on specific standards/criteria and are able to "work up" to those standards.

Guidelines for Writing Rubrics

The following eight steps will help you to develop high-quality rubrics for use in your classes:

1. Identify the competencies or tasks worth mastering.
2. Work jointly with the students to brainstorm specific elements to be assessed and indicators/evidence of performance level achieved. Part of this process may include placing relative value on the elements through weighting as shown on the Job Readiness Skills Portfolio rubric on p. 97.
3. Remember that including too many assessment elements and indicators/evidence gets frustrating for the student and the assessor trying to use the rubric.
4. Identify and use a maximum of six assessment elements; five is better.
5. Determine how many levels of performance you wish to define on the fixed scale. Note that the number of levels of performance do not always equal the number of indicators. You can choose, for example, to use a 5-point scale and then specify indicators only at points 1, 3, and 5. You need to provide enough points to be able to discriminate, but keep in mind that too many levels becomes confusing, particularly if students will be using the rubric.
6. Then, identify the indicators/evidence for each assessment element, specifying the levels of performance that will serve as anchors at key points along the scale.
7. Write the indicators.
   a. Keep to observable behaviors.
   b. When possible, focus on the presence, rather than absence, of behaviors; avoid negatives.

      Good:

      Begins work without setting appropriate goals.

      Less Effective:

      Does not set appropriate goals.

   c. When possible, avoid relying on overused adverbs and adjectives to define the distinction between levels of performance. Try to describe clear distinctions in behavior. For example, don't say *appropriately*; ***define*** what *appropriately* would look like.

      Good:

      4 Student is creative at finding and using information from a variety of sources; combines it *to express his or her own ideas.*

      3 Student uses information from a variety of sources; combines it *in a way that makes sense.*

Less Effective:

4 Student uses information from many different sources and combines it *very well.*

3 Student uses information from different resources and combines it *appropriately.*

d. Use no more than seven indicators per assessment element; three to four is better.

8. ***Use your first draft over a period of time. Continue to revise your rubrics until you believe they provide a comprehensive picture of attainment of proficiency.***

Ideas for Developing a Presentation Rubric

The sample "rubric" that follows contains more indicators/evidence than recommended for use at each performance level. To build a more usable rubric, you can work jointly with students to select the indicators/evidence that are deemed most important.

Competency: Students will demonstrate effective use of the spoken language in formal and informal situations to communicate ideas and information.

Organization and Preparation of Material

5 Clear introduction; creates interest and involves audience
Important information identified; well-organized; thorough; effective sequence
Clear focus on central idea; summarizes main points
Uses a question or challenge as the conclusion to encourage audience to act
Thorough understanding of information; minimal or no use of notes
Uses signal words, summaries, and transitions

3 Introduction brought out main point; creates some points of interest
Covers basic information; organized; sequences information adequately
Identifies central idea; summarizes some points
Conclusions easy to understand; states conclusion with some persuasion
Adequate understanding of information; uses notes some
Uses some words to help audience make transitions

1 Introduction missing or lacks interest
Information lacks depth; disorganized; or does not address topic
Unclear focus
Conclusion statement missing or lacks emphasis
Minimal understanding of information; extensive use of notes
Difficult to follow; lacks summaries, signal words, and transitions

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Vocal Delivery

5 Uses appropriate vocal volume; articulates well; easy to understand
Uses voice expressively; varies tone to add emphasis
Varies speed of delivery to coincide with points in the presentation
Clear, concise language; no distracting words or sounds; pronounces correctly

3 Uses appropriate vocal volume most of the time; mostly understandable
Controls voice expressions; some expressiveness; appropriate tone
Adequate use of language; some distracting words or sounds; pronounces words correctly most of the time

1 Speech volume is erratic; hard to hear and understand; mumbles words
Inexpressive voice; monotone
Rushes delivery or delivery too slow
Uses distracting words or sounds

Visual Delivery

5 Involves audience with skillful use of eye contact, body movement, stance, and gestures
Exhibits self-assurance
Uses visual aids effectively; visuals add interest and emphasis; easily read by audience; easy to grasp main point of visual; attractive

3 Maintains a comfortable level of eye contact with the audience; somewhat effective in using body movement, stance, and gestures
Generally comfortable with presenting
Uses visual aids to help emphasize main points; fairly easily read by audience; moderately easy to understand main points of the visuals

1 Uses little or no eye contact; often looks at the floor or ceiling; has "flitting" eye movement or maintains eye contact too long; uses distracting body stance, movements, or gestures; poor posture

General Effect

5 Actively involves the audience through words, visuals, expressiveness, questions, and interesting information
Leaves the audience informed, challenged, and motivated

3 Adequately keeps the attention and interest of the audience
Leaves the audience informed

1 Loses the attention of the audience or does not get their attention or interest
Leaves the audience uninformed and disinterested

Possible Reflection Questions to Ask

- What did you learn about your ability to communicate ideas and information in a formal presentation?
- Describe your strengths in presenting ideas and information.
- What would you do differently if you had to do this over again?
- How might the ability to communicate ideas and information be helpful in personal, work, school, and family life?

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Each of the four rubrics that follow is designed to measure something different: an action project (project), a brochure (product), teamwork (process skill), and a videotape (presentation). Each also follows the general guidelines for rubric development discussed earlier.

As you review these rubrics, try to imagine actually using them. How easy or hard are they to use? What are their strengths and weaknesses? You may have noted that when an indicator requires the evaluation of many different factors, it becomes more difficult to use.

For example, on the videotape rubric shown, a *5* rating for sound means that it is (1) loud enough and (2) clear, distinct and (3) consistent and (4) enhances video. If each of those elements is of a different quality, what rating do you assign? If you ***average*** to determine the rating, how well does that communicate to the student who wishes to use the feedback for improvement purposes? The level of specificity required will, of course, depend on what you expect of students. For a video production course, this rubric would need to allow for much greater specificity. But for a student-produced video showing the process they followed in completing an FHA/HERO project, this rubric might have just the level of specificity needed.

Note, too, the different approaches used to mark the scale. On two of the handouts, the scale is a "measuring stick," which is ***shaded*** in to indicate level. The teamwork rubric asks team members to ***circle*** the rating. The brochure rubric asks reviewers to place a ***slash*** (or hatch) mark at the point on the scale indicating the rating. The marking technique you select will depend, to a certain extent, on what you want to communicate to students. The shaded bar communicates progress. The circled number allows quick and easy compilation and averaging of scores. The single slash mark highlights a single point of accomplishment.

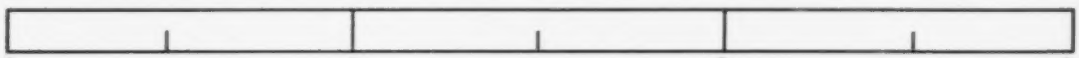
Action Project Assessment

In a conference with your teacher, you will compare your progress and results with the plans you made in the beginning. At the end of your experience, you will need to "take a look." Why don't you try measuring yourself on the measuring sticks below?

Directions: Shade each measuring stick even with the statement that best describes your experience.

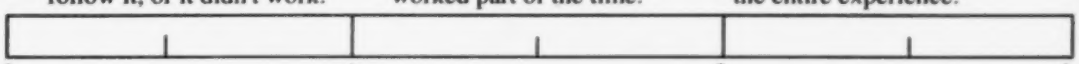
1. ***Choice of experience as related to what I need to learn and what I am able to do***

(a) I chose an experience that failed to meet my most important learning needs. | I chose an experience that met some, but not all, important learning needs. | I chose an experience that challenged my ability.



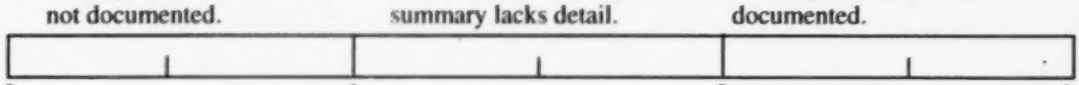
2. ***Plan***

(a) I made a plan, but I didn't follow it, or it didn't work. | I made a plan that worked part of the time. | I made a good plan for the the entire experience.



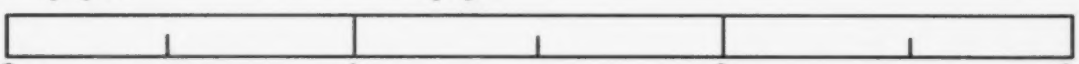
3. ***Written Journal***

(a) Incomplete, several parts missing; learning summary not documented. | Almost complete, some parts missing; learning summary lacks detail. | Complete, all parts included; learning summary well documented.

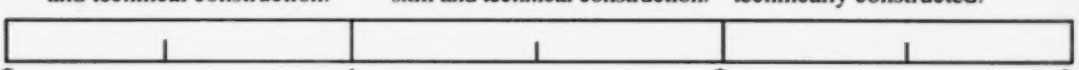


4. ***Project Quality/Completion***

(a) I did not complete the project. | I almost completed the project. | I completed the project.



(b) Project lacks skill in design and technical construction. | Project shows some design skill and technical construction. | Project is well-designed and technically constructed.



Source: Adapted from Vicki Lowe and Lou Howell, *How Do We Know They Know? Alternative Assessments in Home Economics* (Gainesville, VA: Home Economics Education Association, 1994), p. 41.

Brochure Assessment

Directions: Each team will select (or be assigned) a topic, research information, and prepare an instructional brochure. The target audience for the brochure is _____.

Place a slash mark on the scale at the point that indicates how effectively the brochure meets the stated criteria.

5 4 3 2 1

Quality of Research

5	4	3	2	1
Five sources used. Reliable sources. Accurate analysis of the research.		Three sources used. Some reliability of sources. Fair degree of accuracy.		One source used. Questionable reliability. Basic information with inaccuracies.

Application of Knowledge

5	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates in-depth understanding of the topic. Accurately employs researched information in the brochure.		Demonstrates general understanding of the topic. Employs research information with a fair degree of accuracy in the brochure.		Lacks understanding of the topic. Employs only the most basic parts of the information; several misconceptions.

Written Presentation

5	4	3	2	1
Well-organized content. Attractive, well-designed format. Message is clear and easily understood. Typed or computer-formatted; strong eye appeal.		Generally organized content. Adequate design for format. Message is sufficiently understood. Typed or computer-formatted; adequate eye appeal.		Unorganized content; hard to follow. Unattractive format. Message tends to wander or ramble; hard to understand. Handwritten or type lacks neatness.

Creativity

5	4	3	2	1
Imaginative; originality demonstrated. Graphics that made the words "come alive."		Adequate creativity. Some use of graphics that adds to the presentation.		Lacks originality. Few or no graphics used or did not tie them in with words.

On the back of this sheet, write a paragraph that describes how you can use the knowledge gained from the research that was utilized in the brochure.

On the back of this sheet, write a paragraph that describes how working with a team to research and develop a brochure was more effective than having only one person do the task.

Teamwork: How Effective Were We?

After your project is completed, each team member should circle the point on each scale that describes the team's effectiveness. The team's recorder should then compile and average the numbered responses and chart the results on a graph. The team should study the results and discuss areas of strength and areas for improvement.

1. Effective Use of Time

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A lot of time spent without purposeful work		Got off track frequently		Did a good job once we got our ideas clarified and developed a plan		No wasted effort or time; stayed on task and followed the plan	

2. Development of Ideas

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Very little done to generate ideas		Ideas were imposed on the team by one or a few members		Got along well but were not very creative		Ideas were encouraged and fully explored	

3. Ability to Decide Issues

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Unable to solve differences		Let one person rule and decide for the team		Compromised to get the job completed		Genuine agreement and support	

4. Participation in Decision Making

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Little or no participation by some team members; did not draw them in		All participated, but it was unequal among the members		Gave some feedback, support, and encouragement to team members		All actively involved; encouraged others and shared appreciation for efforts and ideas	

5. Communication of Thoughts and Ideas

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Members withheld comments and did not listen to others		Quality of communication was limited; mediocre attempt to listen to others		Listened and shared ideas to get the job done, but not as thorough as it could have been		Shared ideas openly and effectively; listened attentively to others; clarified and questioned ideas	

6. Productivity

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Did not accomplish our goal		Barely accomplished the job		Just did what we had to do		Held a highly productive session	

Videotape Assessment

Directions to the teacher, student, or peer reviewer: Shade in the scale from right to left at the point that indicates how effectively the videotape meets the stated criteria.

5 4 3 2 1

Sound	**Sound**
Loud enough	Difficult to hear
Clear, distinct	Garbled
Consistent	Breaks off
Enhances video	Detracts from video

5 4 3 2 1

Color	**Color**
Clear, vivid	Fuzzy, dull
Consistent color	Changes color
Background color enhances main character/focal point	Background color detracts from main character/focal point

5 4 3 2 1

Narration	**Narration**
Picture framed with words that captured the tone of the scenes	Words out of sync with the picture; detracted from the tone of the scenes
	Included: introduction, body, summary, and conclusion
	Too fast or slow in rate of speaking

5 4 3 2 1

Organization	**Organization**
Logical sequence of events	Events seemed out of sequence
Length of segments timely	Length of segments either too long or too short
Length of video appropriate for the topic or audience	Length of video too long or too short for the topic or audience
Content well-researched	Content lacked depth

5 4 3 2 1

Camera Work	**Camera Work**
Smooth transition from one segment or shot to the next one	Rough transition from one segment or shot to the next; choppy
Accurately focused	Out of focus at times
Zoom used effectively and smoothly	Zoom not used at all or used too often; caused distraction
Variety of camera techniques used	Limited or no variety in camera techniques

Some Alternative Assessment Tools

Scoring Sheets

Scoring sheets (or checklists) do not provide descriptors at multiple levels. They simply present the elements to be assessed and provide space for indicating the level achieved. By their nature, they are a less objective tool than the rubric, which clearly describes performance at various levels throughout the range.

Two scoring sheets are presented on the following pages:

- **Teamwork Skills Scoring Sheet**

  This criterion-referenced scoring sheet lists the criteria team members should meet and assigns possible points to each criterion. Team members, working together, rate their performance against each criterion. They then reflect on their performance by responding to the reflection questions posed. The scoring sheet can be given to the teacher, who would rate the quality of their reflections. Points could then be totalled to produce an overall teamwork score.

- **Discussion Scoring Sheet**

  The activity for which this scoring sheet is used is a fishbowl discussion. First you need to select an issue that promotes objectives related to the content being covered. Next, you need to help students separate the issue into simpler parts. After conducting an initial exploratory discussion of the issue, you can distribute the scoring sheets, review the criteria, and coach students on the scoring process.

  Students are then divided into two groups. The first group should include one-third of the students. This group sits in an inner circle and discusses the assigned topic. The remainder of the students encircle the first group, listen and take notes, and then critique the discussion using the scoring sheet provided.

Teamwork Skills Scoring Sheet

CRITERIA: As team members we—	**Points Possible**	**Points Earned**
• Identified the problem accurately	3	_____
• Clarified or explained the problem	3	_____
• Identified specific uncooperative behaviors	3	_____
• Gave factual information to clarify the problem and seek alternatives	3	_____
• Gave value information to clarify the problem and seek alternatives	3	_____
• Identified the effects of uncooperative behaviors on the individual responsible	6	_____
• Identified the effects of uncooperative behaviors on the other members of the group	6	_____
• Identified a minimum of 3 alternative solutions to the problem	9	_____
• Identified a minimum of 3 positive and/or negative consequences for each alternative	9	_____
• Selected the alternative we felt was the best one for the situation	3	_____
• Justified why we thought it was the best alternative	3	_____
• Identified action steps for implementing the chosen alternative	3	_____
• Evaluated the likely outcomes if this alternative was implemented	3	_____
REFLECTION:		
What specific behaviors did we use effectively as we worked as as a team on this assessment?	6	_____
If we did the same task over, what would we do differently? Why?	6	_____
	69 Total	_____

Discussion Scoring Sheet

Directions: Use this scoring sheet to rate student performance in conducting a fishbowl discussion. First, write in the topic to be discussed and the names of the students involved. Then, as the discussion occurs, ***each time*** a student displays one of the listed behaviors, write the assigned point value in the box where the student's column and the behavior's line intersect. Note that each student may score points more than once in each area. At the end of the discussion, total the points for each student.

Topic:_____

Names:						
(+2) Taking a position on a question						
(+1) Making a relevant comment						
(+2) Using evidence to support a position or presenting factual information						
(+1) Drawing another person into the discussion						
(+2) Recognizing contradictions in another person's statements						
(+2) Recognizing when another person makes an irrelevant comment						
(+2) Making an analogy						
(+1) Asking a clarifying question or moving the discussion along						
(-2) Distracting others or not paying attention						
(-2) Interrupting						
(-1) Making irrelevant comments						
(-3) Monopolizing						
(-3) Making personal attacks						
Total Points:						

The scored discussion strategy was first developed by Fred Newmann at the University of Wisconsin.

Source: Adapted from Vicki Lowe and Lou Howell, *How Do We Know They Know? Alternative Assessments in Home Economics* (Gainesville, VA: Home Economics Education Association, 1994), p. 22.

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